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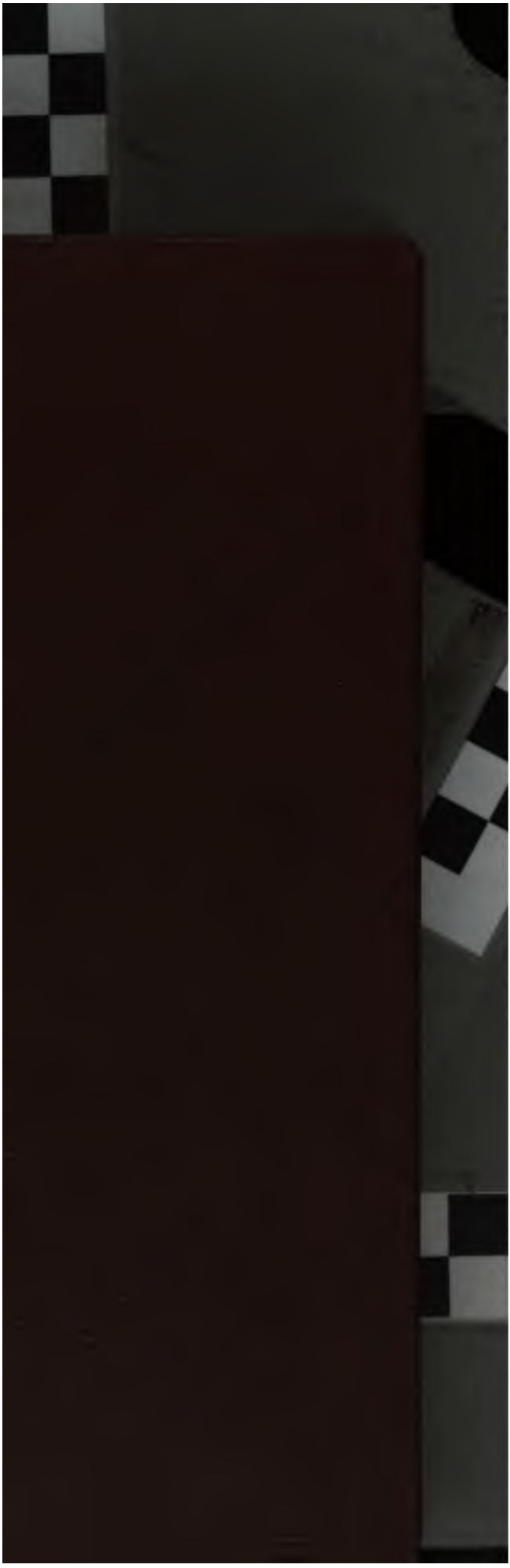
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AN

ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY

OF

IRELAND,

FROM THE

INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY

INTO THAT COUNTRY,

TO THE

COMMENCEMENT OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

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While journeying to Tarah, he converts Seschnen and his family.

He arrives at Tarah on the vigil of Easter, and prepares to celebrate the feast by enkindling the Paschal fire.

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Prepares to visit Connaught.

While journeying thither converts two of the daughters of King Leogaire.

He spends seven years in that province, and appoints pastors to preside over

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While in that province, a conspiracy is formed against his life.

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He goes to Munster and opens his missionary career at Cashel.

He is kindly received by Natfraich, the Sovereign of that Province.

He converts and baptizes Aengus, the Son of Natfraich.

He visits the other parts of Munster, and succeeds in forming numerous congregations of Christians in every portion of that province.

Having spent seven years there, he prepares to revisit the churches, which he had founded in the other parts of the Island.

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No general arrangement for the permanent regulation of the Irish church having been made by Palladius, the duty of making such an arrangement devolved on St. Patrick.

This arrangement was conformable to that, which St. Patrick saw followed in the churches of Rome, of Gaul, and of the other places, which he had visited.

In virtue of this arrangement, the honour and authority of the Primacy descend to Benignus, his successor in the See of Armagh.

In the twelfth century the Bishop of Cashel is advanced to the rank of a Metropolitan.

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On his journey he becomes acquainted with St. Bernard.

He is introduced to Innocent the Second.

The Pope refuses him leave to retire to Clairvaux.

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He is deputed by the Synod to present their petition in person to Eugenius, who was then at Clairvaux.

He is detained in England, and thus loses the opportunity of seeing the Pontiff.

He proceeds however to Clairvaux; is seized with a dangerous illness, and dies.

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The Cardinal arrives in England, and is prevented by King Stephen from prosecuting his mission to Ireland.

He returns to Rome, and resumes his journey to Ireland; but instead of passing through England, he proceeds to Scotland.

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The Clergyman who violated the ordinance of the Irish church in the application of his revenues, was subjected to excommunication.
The Irish Canons ordered that each Christian should, at his death, set apart a portion of his wealth for religious purposes.
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INTRODUCTION.

At the commencement of the Christian era, Ireland was estranged from the knowledge of the true God. Of the peculiar superstition that deluded her people, it here suffices to remark, that its ritual appears to have been less gross and less revolting than that, which was then generally adopted by the other nations of Europe.

To the Irish reader it would be gratifying to be informed of each circumstance connected with the first announcement of Christianity to his countrymen: unfortunately, however, the authentic records of Irish history are too imperfect to afford him this gratification.

Had Christianity, at its introduction into Ireland, encountered the same opposition which it elsewhere experienced, the first vestiges of its progress in our island would be, perhaps, more accurately defined than they now are, and might be traced, at the

present day, with greater facility. But the progress of religion in Ireland was rarely opposed by the sword of the persecutor, and the triumph of religion there, was, for the most part, peaceful, until the Irish people were gained over to the Gospel.

In another respect, the circumstances attendant on the first progress of the Irish Church differed from those, which ordinarily accompanied the growth of the Gospel seed in other regions. While, in other countries, religion was oftentimes troubled by the dissensions of her children, in Ireland her peace was happily undisturbed by the abettors of heresy, or schism. Such dissensions, wheresoever they prevailed, injured, indeed, the best interests of religion. They were not, however, without advantage to the history of those churches, the repose of which they interrupted. In the controversies which they occasioned, many interesting particulars relating to ecclesiastical history were brought to light. These controversies, moreover, drew the attention of the chief Pastors of the Church to that portion of the faithful whose peace was unsettled, and awakened, for that part of the Christian community, a solicitude, which might have, otherwise, slumbered. But, happily for the welfare of the infant church of Ireland, her children were ever singularly averse from the spirit of religious

strife. This felicitous disrelish discouraged among them the indulgence of an adventurous ingenuity in the investigation of revealed truth, and caused the Gospel seed to grow to maturity, there, unchecked by an influence, that greatly prejudiced its advancement in other kingdoms. The peaceful condition of primitive Christianity in our Island, propitious as it certainly was to the fervent practice of the Gospel virtues, must have caused many things to be deemed of little moment, which, from the controversies of modern times, have become interesting and important. Thus, in the concerns of private life, while the possessor's title to his property is not questioned, documents are often unheeded, which might afterwards adjust the pretensions of rival claimants to an inheritance.

The connexion that existed between Rome and the nations that composed her provinces, conferred on the ecclesiastical history of these nations an important advantage, of which the history of the Irish Church but partially participated. It was ever the wise policy of Rome, to teach her dependant provinces to resort to the seat of empire for assistance in their emergencies. After the introduction of the Gospel, Rome became, at once, the seat of religion and of empire. Here, the Supreme Pastor of the Catholic Church fixed the Apostolic see—the

centre and bond of Catholic unity and communion. The comparative facility of intercourse with Rome, which arose from her civil relation with distant regions, afforded to the Christians throughout the provinces an opportunity of holding intercourse with each other, and with the Roman Pontiff, the common parent of all the faithful. Of this intercourse, ecclesiastical history supplies ample testimony: and by its means, many circumstances connected with the annals of Christianity in one country, were introduced into the ecclesiastical record of other kingdoms. The advantage of such intercourse, it has been remarked, the history of the Irish Church only partially enjoyed. Pursuing its splendid career, the Roman Eagle had, indeed, reached the neighbouring heights of Britain; but the empire already tottered from its own unwieldiness; and the dissensions of its leading men daily augmented the danger. Eager to humble the Queen of Nations, her enemies dared encounter in the field her armies, which had been hitherto deemed invincible. Occasional success increased the confidence of the assailants, and encouraged them to engage in more arduous enterprises against her dominion. The plains of Italy were ravaged by contending armies, and the ruin of her greatness

was at hand, when, to ward off the danger, the legions stationed in Britain were called home. The varied events with which the history of Rome was afterwards chequered, absorbed the attention of her rulers, and left them neither leisure nor ability to attempt the recovery of former conquests, much less to indulge in ulterior projects of ambition. To this embarrassment of the Roman empire, it is probable, that Ireland owed her exemption from a foreign yoke. The commercial advantages of Ireland had, from an early period, invited, in such numbers, the merchants of distant regions to her ports, that Tacitus* affirms her harbours to have been better known, even than those of Britain. The importance of effecting a settlement in a country possessed of such advantages, the Romans could fully appreciate; and to attain an object of so great moment, they would have cheerfully encountered every difficulty and danger. Had Ireland been annexed to the Roman provinces, and had a connexion been thus established between her and the seat of western empire, some of the obscurities that darken her ancient history would, doubtless, be elucidated by the Roman Writers.

The circumstances, here enumerated, effected,

* Melius aditus portusque per commercia et negotiatiores cogniti. Tacit. vita Agricolæ.

but partially, and, as it were, negatively, the interests of Irish history. But besides these circumstances, there are others of more recent occurrence, originating in the civil and religious calamities it was the destiny of Ireland so often to endure, which have occasioned a far greater and more irreparable injury to her ancient annals. But, though the History of Ireland has been thus deprived of some important advantages, it will be seen, in the following pages, that, of the nations first converted to the Gospel, there are few notwithstanding, whose remaining records are more attractive and better authenticated.

Of the holy men, who were the first instructers of the Irish people in the truths of redemption, many had enjoyed in youth the benefit of a liberal education. These enlightened men laboured to impart to their converts a relish for such pursuits, as tended to wean the Neophytes from coarse and sensual habits, and to attemper their feelings to the kindly suggestions of religion. The zeal of the missionaries was quickly rewarded by the fame, which Ireland acquired for sanctity and learning. In the records of almost every nation of Europe, we find honourable mention of the splendid exertions of Irishmen, in favour of religion and literature. With a generosity, which is

attested by writers not chargeable with partiality, Ireland threw open her schools to the youth of foreign countries, and oftentimes provided gratuitously for their support.

But the zeal of Irishmen was not content with encouraging at home, the cause of religion and of letters. In the simple, but expressive language of an ancient writer,* learned and holy men issued forth in swarms from Ireland, "like bees from the hive," to diffuse in distant regions those blessings in which their native land so largely participated. Of the religious and literary institutions erected by them in other countries, many vestiges yet remain, and in many of the places which were once the theatre of their enlightened labours, the memory of these holy men is still cherished and revered.

In a history such as the present professes to be, an authenticated exposition of the religious principles of the primitive Irish Church will be naturally expected. If we credit certain writers, we shall find in the ancient creed of the Irish people, defined vestiges of the doctrines that divide the Reformed Societies from the Catholic Church. In support of this assertion, some of these writers labour to show, that Ireland owes its Christianity

* St. Bernard vita Malach.

to Eastern Missionaries, and not to preachers sent thither by the Apostolick See. Relying but little on a statement so gratuitously advanced, other controversialists have seized with avidity on certain passages in the works of our ancient authors, and have assigned to these passages an interpretation favourable to the reformed doctrines.

In reply to the assertion on which the advocates of Protestantism rest their cause, I shall, if I mistake not, establish, in the first place, that the Irish Church owes its origin to missionaries, who were sanctioned by the authority of St. Peter's successors. The sequel of the present history will show, that the connexion thus formed between the Roman and the Irish Churches was always maintained. The existence of this connexion, from the era of the English invasion, not being controverted, my attention will be principally directed to the period, which precedes that epoch. The permanent communion of the Roman and the Irish Churches being once established, an important consequence obviously ensues—the perfect unity of the religious creed of both these Churches. From this consequence it follows, that whatsoever ambiguous doctrinal passages occur in our ancient writers, must be interpreted, so as to accord with the received faith of the Roman Church. The

constant communion of the Churches of Rome and Ireland being once proved, it would be absurd to affix to an ambiguous expression, found in any of our ancient authors, a meaning, wholly incompatible with the existence of that communion.

The unity of the two Churches, which it is here designed to prove, extends, it need scarcely be remarked, not to regulations of a merely disciplinary nature, but only to those that regard the moral and dogmatical parts of the Christian religion. The communion of the Irish and the Roman Churches, while it required perfect harmony in their code of faith and morals, allowed a certain latitude to each Church, in the choice of its disciplinary regulations.

The course I intend to pursue in the present history, is now before the reader. By adhering to that course, it will be easy to show the entire accordance of primitive Christianity in Ireland, with that creed, to which Irishmen still cling, with a fidelity which has triumphed over the persecution of centuries, and which has made their faith, like that of the first Christians at Rome, to be spoken of throughout the world.

In executing the proposed undertaking, I will ever bear in memory, that religion spurns the aid of prejudice or misrepresentation, and will avail herself only of that advocacy, which is mindful of

the reverence due to charity and truth. If the following pages shall contribute to diffuse these exalted virtues—if they shall serve to attach the Catholic more affectionately to his faith, and excite him to emulate the holy men who adorned the infancy of Irish Christianity, I will deem my time to have been profitably employed. If, moreover, they shall happily assist in placing, in its true light, before my Protestant countrymen, that religion, which once shone with such lustre in our Island, great will be my joy, and the reward of my labour abundant exceedingly.

ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY

OF

IRELAND.

CHAPTER I.

Origin of Christianity in Ireland—Mission of Palladius—of St. Patrick—Superstition of the Irish before their Conversion, &c. &c.

The shade of remote antiquity impends over the origin of Christianity in Ireland. The peculiar means, which Providence employed to convey to that country the first tidings of redemption, are hence concealed from view. To relieve the obscurity, our historians have resorted to the aid of conjecture; and the intercourse of Ireland with the nations first converted to the Gospel, has been assigned as the medium, through which the first rays of religion dawned on our island. The simplicity of this hypothesis recommends it to attention, while the intercourse which it assumes, that Ireland formerly maintained with foreign countries, rests on unquestioned testimony.

In the economy of the New Dispensation, it is remarkable, that the nations which beheld those manifestations of the Almighty power, that attended the promulgation of the Gospel, were generally linked by the ties of commerce or of policy with other distant regions. Thus, an opportunity was afforded to such persons as civil or commercial concerns drew from home to those countries, where first the Divine origin of the Gospel was authenticated by miracles, of inquiring into a religion, which the Deity so unequivocally sanctioned.

That these persons, on their return home, informed their countrymen of what they had heard and seen relating to the new code of worship, may be reasonably presumed. On a subject so important and so interesting, they could not have remained silent, when communing with friends endeared to them by the alliance of kindred and of country.

But by whatsoever means the tidings of salvation were first conveyed to Ireland, it is certain that the light of the Gospel appeared at a very early period in her horizon. Among the proofs of this assertion, the following incident may be justly numbered:—In a part of the country, in a place whither Palladius or his associates had not penetrated, the sacred vessels of the altar were discovered, almost immediately after St. Patrick had commenced his Apostolic labours.* An important portion of the Christian Worship, it would hence appear, was known in a part, at least, of the kingdom, before St. Patrick engaged in the conversion of the Irish people.

The language of St. Prosper confirms the accuracy of

* Colgan. Tr. Th. part 11, Cap. 35, and Jocelin Cap. 105.

this inference, and favours even the opinion, that previously to St. Patrick's mission, the knowledge of the Gospel had reached many parts of the island.*

The authority of St. Prosper proves indeed, that, before the period of St. Patrick's Apostleship, there were among the Irish people, some who had embraced the Christian faith. But that the professors of the Gospel in Ireland were then only few in number, the testimony of St. Patrick clearly evinces:—"The Irish," says the holy man, "who till this time had not the knowledge of God, and worshipped idols and unclean things, how are they now become the people of the Lord, and are called the sons of God."†

From the disciplinary regulations‡ which appear to have been made at the very origin of the Church in Ireland, it may be also collected, that the ancient superstition of the Irish people prevailed to such an extent, at least for some time after the opening of St. Patrick's mission, as to require that the intercourse of the Christian converts with their unbelieving countrymen, should be placed under salutary restraint.

Besides the direct arguments which establish, that the Irish people adhered to a false worship, when St. Patrick

* Speaking of Palladius' mission, St. Prosper says, that Palladius was sent "Ad Scotos in Christian credentes." Chron. Basso et Antiocho. Coss. (A. D. 431.)

† Unde autem Hiberione, qui nunquam Dei notitiam habuerunt, et non nisi idola et imunda usque nunc semper coluerunt, quomodo nuper facta est plebs. Domini et filii Dei nuncupantur. Confes. St. Patric. p. 16.

‡ The rule, for example, that prohibits alms offered by a Gentile to be received into the Church; and that also which enjoins on the clergy not to bring any suits before infidel judges. Vid. Spelman, Ware Opusc T. Patric. adscrip. Can. 1 and 13.

engaged in their conversion, we may refer, moreover, to St. Prosper's account of the mission of Palladius. According to Prosper's narrative, Palladius was "the first Bishop" to whom the care of the Irish mission was confided. Now, had the Gospel seed been generally disseminated throughout Ireland, previously to the mission of Palladius, the wants of the rising Church in that country would doubtless have required, before the fifth century, the aid of the Episcopal authority. For, it has ever been the usage of ecclesiastical antiquity, that a numerous congregation of the faithful, such as, in the opinion now combated, the Irish Christians then were, should be confided to the care of a Bishop. The importance which Christian antiquity ascribed to those functions, that exclusively belong to the Episcopal order, caused the usage here spoken of to be observed in every age with scrupulous fidelity. It cannot be then supposed, that the converts to the Gospel in Ireland, had they been numerous, would have been left, for a protracted period, destitute of an advantage, which was carefully imparted to other countries.

It has been indeed maintained, that, before the mission of Palladius, those who professed the faith in Ireland were governed by Bishops, and the advocates of this opinion produce the names of some Ecclesiastics, who they assert, administered the episcopal functions there, before the time of Palladius. To me it appears, that without the aid of an ingenuity which candour will not sanction, such an opinion cannot be reconciled with the narrative of St. Prosper. This narrative distinctly states, that Palladius, having received episcopal consecration from Pope Celestine, was the first Bishop that was sent to the Scots who believed in

Christ.* These are the words of a writer who composed his work with no other view, than that he might leave to posterity an unadorned narrative of the events which he relates. The words of such a writer should, it is manifest, be understood in their literal and obvious signification. If they be thus interpreted, it ensues, that the first believers among our countrymen were not placed under the care of a bishop, until Palladius had arrived in Ireland.

The language which St. Prosper uses on another occasion confirms the accuracy of this inference. Speaking of St. Celestine's exertions to extirpate Pelagianism from Britain, Prosper subjoins,† that "Celestine had ordained a Bishop for the Scots, and that while his zeal was engaged in preserving the integrity of the faith in Britain, a Roman island, it accomplished also the conversion of Scotia, an island placed beyond the limits of the Roman empire." It was St. Prosper's object, on this occasion, to eulogise the pastoral zeal of Celestine for the infant Church of Ireland. The zeal of this Pontiff for the Irish Church, entitled him in St. Prosper's opinion, to particular commendation, and claimed from his contemporaries, and from posterity, the praise due to distinguished exertions in favour of religion. But if the Irish Church had been already placed under Pastors of the Episcopal order, the addition of one Bishop to her

* Ad Scotos in Christum credentes ordinatus a Papa Celestino Palladius primus Episcopus mittitur. Prosper Chron. Basso et Antiocho Coss. A. D. 431. Labbe's edition. Nova Biblioth. MSS librorum, tom. I. Canisiusc' edition Biblioth. Patr. Lugd. T. 8. Bede. Chron. et Histor. Eccles. Angl. L. 1, c. 13.

† Nec segniore cura ab hoc eodem morbo (Pelagiano) Britannias liberavit, quando quosdam inimicos gratiæ, solum suæ originis occupantes etiam ab illo secreto exclusit oceani: et ordinato Scotis episcopo, dum Romanam insulam studet servare Catholicam fecit etiam Barbaram Christianam. Lib. de gratia Christi contra Cassian. C. 47.

hierarchy would leave St. Celestine but a slender claim indeed to peculiar praise.

The narrative of St. Prosper so far as relates to the present inquiry, is confirmed by the numerous writers, who adopt his language when they speak of Palladius' mission to Ireland.* In support of the preceding observations it may be also remarked, that there is satisfactory evidence, that the ecclesiastics, who are represented as the predecessors of Palladius in the Irish episcopacy, belonged to a more recent period than that in which Palladius flourished.† Finally, as it has been shown, that up to the period of St. Patrick's mission, the people of Ireland, a few only excepted, still adhered to a false worship, it is not credible that a number of Bishops should have been charged with the spiritual care of the few dispersed Christians, who then inhabited that small and sequestered island.

With the preceding inquiry another is connected, to

* Bede Chron. et Hist, Eccl. Angl. l. 1, c. 13. See also the Chroniclers quoted by Usher, p. 799. The words, "ordinato Scotis Episcopo," as used by Prosper, obviously imply, that, when Palladius was sent to the Scots, (thus the Irish people were formerly called,) there was no other Bishop in Ireland, and also, that Palladius was the only Bishop to whom the care of the Irish Church was, in the first instance, confided by Pope Celestine.

† As Ailbe, Declan, Ibar, and Kieran, are the ecclesiastics, who are usually represented as the predecessors of Palladius in the episcopal dignity, I shall here briefly refer to the evidence which proves, that they were posterior in time to him. Tirechan, quoted by Ware, Antiquities chap. 29; Colgan Tripartite Life of St. Patrick; Jocelin, chap. 83. The Annals of Ulster and Innisfallen refer the death of Ailbe to the year 527. Ware adduces the authority of these annals to prove, that Ailbe lived at a more recent period than Palladius who commenced his mission A. D. 431, and died either in the same year, or in the early part of 432. Usher acknowledges that the same annals are opposed to the opinion, that Ailbe preached the Gospel to the Irish people before St. Patrick. That Declan survived Ailbe appears from Colgan A. A. S. S., p, 608, and from Ware Annot. ad Opusc. S. P., p. 106. Ibar died A. D. 500: Annal. Ulton and Innisfail. Ware Annot. ad Opusc. &c., p. 106. Usher Ind. Chron. Kieran was a disciple of Finnian, who flourished in the sixth century. Vita S. Finniani cap. 19. A. A. SS. ad 23 Febi. Usher, p. 909.

which the controversies of modern times have given a more than due importance. From which quarter of the universe, it is asked, were those rays of the Gospel light reflected, which had appeared in the horizon of Ireland before Palladius' mission to that country? To this question two different replies have been returned. While the advocates of Catholicity on the one hand, have traced the origin of the true religion in Ireland to some Western region, the more recent abettors of the Reformation have sought to fix the day star of Irish Christianity in the East.

Could it be shown, that, at the period when the Gospel light first gleamed on Ireland, the Eastern and Western Churches dissented from each other in doctrine, the inquiry under consideration would be, perhaps, not uninteresting. But as, at that period, the Christians of the East and West were happily united in the profession of the same faith, it were unavailing for the advocate of the Reformation to prove, that Ireland drew the waters of salvation originally from the East.

But even were it conceded, that, so early as the fifth century, the Eastern and Western Churches differed from each other in faith, the concession could not serve the cause of the Reformation, unless it were also shown, that this discrepancy in belief was occasioned by a dissent on the peculiar tenets, on which Catholics and Protestants are divided. That no such division ever existed between the churches of the East and West, the present unanimity of both churches on these doctrines sufficiently attests.

In truth, it is obvious, from the history of Palladius and of St. Patrick, that the faith of the Roman church did not conflict with that received by such as professed Christianity in Ireland, at the period when these Apostolick men com-

menced their mission in that country. For we may reasonably suppose, that had any controversy on faith occurred between the Roman missionaries and those Christians who dwelt in Ireland when Palladius and St. Patrick first preached the Gospel there, some allusion to it would occur in the early annals of Irish Christianity. In these annals, we find that St. Patrick makes mention of the principal difficulties which he encountered in his mission. It cannot be then believed, that he would pass by in silence the formidable opposition which heresy, had it infected the fold of Irish Christianity, would have raised up against him. We must therefore conclude, that the Christians who inhabited Ireland, when Palladius and St. Patrick were sent thither, had been instructed in faith either by Roman missionaries, or by teachers whose creed entirely accorded with that which was taught both by Palladius and St. Patrick.

But (for to some the interrogatory seems important) does not the mode of celebrating Easter which was formerly used in Ireland favour the opinion, that Ireland received the first tidings of salvation from the East? The mode of fixing the recurrence of the Christian Passover which, for some time, the Irish church followed, did not, it is true, entirely accord with that eventually adopted at Rome.* This transitory discrepancy however, was, if we believe writers whose impartiality cannot be suspected, of comparatively recent growth, and owed its origin to circumstances of a political and accidental nature.†

Moreover, it should be remembered, that while the Irish

* The letter of Laurence, Archbishop of Canterbury, seems to have first drawn the attention of the Irish to the Paschal controversy. This letter Bede refers to the year 609, and so early as 633 the Roman cycle was generally received in Ireland.

† Prideaux and Bingham state, that the British and Irish churches followed originally the rule of the Roman church respecting Easter, and that the discre-

computation respecting Easter differed only partially from that of Rome, it wholly departed from that principle by which the Quartodeciman system* was peculiarly distinguished. Among the Irish, the Sunday was invariably chosen for the celebration of the Christian Passover.† With the Quartodecimans, on the contrary, the day on which Easter fell in their computation, even though that day were not the Christian Sabbath, was always set apart for the Paschal solemnity.

Thus the mode of celebrating Easter to which, for some time, the Irish church adhered, instead of disproving, confirms, on the contrary, the arguments advanced to show, that Ireland received the first knowledge of religion from the West.

The justness of this conclusion is also established by the evidence of our ecclesiastical annals. The selection of the Christian Sabbath for the celebration of Easter, distinguished, as has been remarked, the usage of the Irish church from that which was followed by the Quartodecimans. But the zeal of Laurence, who, at the commencement of the seventh century governed the Metropolitan See of Canterbury, was impatient that any deviation from the Roman rite respecting Easter should be permitted in Ireland. After a fruitless conference on the subject with one of the Irish Prelates, Laurence addressed an Epistle on the Paschal question to his Episcopal Brethren in Ireland. While the letter of Laurence engaged the attention of the

pancy between these churches, which afterwards occured, arose from the circumstance, that after the Saxon invasion, all communication of the British and Irish churches with Rome was for a considerable time wholly interrupted. Prideaux Connection, &c., part 11, book 4. Bingham, book 20, chap. 5, sec. 4.

* This system, it may be remarked, was only partially adopted in Asia.

† This is acknowledged by Wilfred in his conference with Colman.—Bede l. 3, c. 4. and by Bede himself, l. 3, c. 4.

Irish clergy, another of a like import was received from Pope Honorius. To give due consideration to a subject, which all regarded as important, a synod was convened.* To their younger brethren in the sacred ministry, the more experienced Pastors imparted the sage admonition of their own venerated predecessors—the disciples of the holy men to whose zeal Ireland owed her conversion. "They," said the assembled elders, "charged us to receive, with humility, and without hesitation, whatever approved institutes are brought to us from the fountain of our baptism and of our wisdom, and from the successors of the Apostles: it is, therefore, our desire, that the festival of Easter be observed, after the custom of the Universal Church." The advice was approved of. To calm the apprehensions of the more scrupulous, it was however resolved, that the controversy should be referred to the "Head of Cities," and that, for this purpose, "some wise and humble persons should be sent to Rome, as children to their mother."†

The evidence supplied by these words evinces, what the impression both of the clergy and the people of Ireland then was, as to the source whence "their baptism and their wisdom were derived." And, what is of great importance, the same evidence proves, that this universal persuasion of the Irish nation respecting the origin of their baptism, prevailed at a period, when many still lived, who had conversed, if not with the founders of the Irish church, at least with the holy men, to whose care the first Apostles of Ireland had consigned the sacred deposit of the faith. In the synod above spoken of, the advocates of the Roman rite regarding Easter, refer, with a confidence which truth

* The synod was held at Old Leighlin, A. D. 630.

† Cummian Paschal Ep.

alone could have inspired, to the Apostolic See as to the fountain of Irish Christianity. Could the accuracy of this reference have been questioned, those who opposed the Roman mode of celebrating Easter would, doubtless, have profited of the opportunity to strengthen their own cause, and impugn a statement, to which their adversaries attached so much importance. Instead, however, of questioning the truth of this statement, the opponents of the Roman system, on the contrary, sanction the resolve, "that humble and pious persons should be sent to Rome, as children to their mother." It must have been, then, held, as an admitted truth, as well by the opponents, as by the upholders of the Roman usage respecting Easter, that Ireland received the first knowledge of the Gospel from missionaries, whose labours were sanctioned by the Apostolic See.

To the opinion which favours the Western origin of Irish Christianity, it has been also objected, that the former commercial intercourse of Ireland with the East makes it probable, that Ireland received thence the first light of the Gospel.

But the present question is, it should be remembered, one, on which we are to pronounce, according to the evidence of history, and not according to what may be suggested by conjecture. It may, however, be observed, that with what has been advanced to prove that Ireland originally derived her knowledge of religion from the West, it is not inconsistent to suppose, that, among the first congregations of Irish Christians, there were individuals, who received their knowledge of religion from the East.

To those whose piety recognises the directing hand of the Deity, in each circumstance, that accompanies the conversion of a people, the question, on which we now treat, may supply an interesting subject for reflection. Had the

people of Ireland received the faith from the East, they might have also become familiar with those heterodox subtleties, with which the fervour of Eastern imagination had so early and so frequently injured the sublime simplicity of the Gospel. With those who maintain, that both the Irish people and the peculiar superstition which this people practised before their conversion, were derived from the East, the preceding observation will merit particular attention. They will readily concede, that the origin of the Irish people would have naturally inclined this people to adopt with the Gospel the same errors, which had been so prevalent among the Christians of the East.

To discuss the opinion which assigns the origin of the Irish people to the East, does not come properly within the limits of the present history. It will not, however, be foreign from my purpose, to touch upon the superstition which prevailed in Ireland, previously to the introduction of Christianity into that country. The reader will be thus enabled to pronounce, whether that superstition agreed with the worship, which was received throughout the principal regions of the East. Were this coincidence of the religious rites of the Eastern and Irish people satisfactorily established, it would aid in adjusting the controversy on the origin of the first inhabitants of Ireland.

If we refer to the circumstances which modified the Pagan worship in any particular country, we shall find them to supply data, that will assist us in tracing the origin of the inhabitants of that country. Judea alone excepted, Idolatry, under divers forms, everywhere prevailed, before the coming of the Redeemer. In every country, both the object of the popular worship, and the rites used in the celebration of that worship, were variously modified by the peculiar genius or by the prevailing passions of the people. Thus, while the

ritual of one nation prescribed ordinances of a cruel and sanguinary character, that of another enjoined that some impure idol should be worshipped by the indulgence of the grossest passions. In short, between the predominant habits of each people, and the superstition which the same people adopted, a certain correspondence, and, if I may so speak, a certain sympathy may be ordinarily discerned.

Hence, when climate, education, and the usual avocations of a people aided the development of those refined feelings, which promote habits of virtue; the received worship in any country was, for the most part, of a less gross and less degrading character than ordinarily appertained to Paganism in other regions.

In the system of Pagan theology another remarkable feature may be also noticed—the profound veneration which Paganism inculcated for every object, that influenced, in the imagination of its votaries, the concerns in which they were interested. Did they, for example, derive from the bounteousness of the soil their principal means of subsistence; or, was the care of their flocks that which chiefly engaged their attention; the sun and the moon, with the whole host of heaven, were for them so many deities, whose favour they were anxious to propitiate.

The superstition of the Pagan world being thus affected by the circumstances that have been enumerated, we should expect, that in countries entirely separated from each other, and placed in almost opposite hemispheres, a different modification of it would prevail. If these observations be just, it will naturally surprise us, to find a people placed on the confines of the western world devoted to the same rites which were followed in the remote regions of the East; and this will appear yet more extraordinary, if the like traces of this worship be not discernable among the

other inhabitants of the West. That such similarity was effected by the missionary exertions of any minister of the Pagan superstition will not be pretended. For before the Christian era, the diffusion among other nations of the worship which was received in any particular country, does not appear to have been ever contemplated by the adherents of Paganism. Commerce, emigration, or conquest might, indeed, have occasionally given to the religious rites of one country a place in the worship received by other nations. But no instance is recorded of a mission undertaken by any of the votaries of Paganism, for the purpose of diffusing the superstition to which they were themselves addicted.

To apply these observations to the present subject, it suffices to point out the strong resemblance, that existed between the received worship of the Irish people, before their conversion to the Gospel, and that which we know to have prevailed throughout the East. Allusion has been already made to the influence, which education, climate, and the ordinary avocations of a people exercised on the form of Paganism which each country adopted. In no place do we find these circumstances exerting a more defined influence on the prevailing superstition, than in the East. The inhabitants of that region beheld each day with admiration the great luminary of the universe careering in glory through the heavens. They witnessed, each revolving year, the choicest earthly benedictions and the most awful inflictions dispensed by its agency. To no object, they concluded, was their homage more justly due, than to that, on which so much of human happiness and of human misery appeared so manifestly to depend. From the adoration of the great source of light and heat, they passed, by an easy transition, to that of the

element, which produced kindred effects. To honour the divinity of fire, temples were, therefore, raised, altars were erected, priests appointed to celebrate its rites and guard its sanctuary from profanation.* For this abuse of reason, that ennobling attribute with which Providence has exalted mankind that they might know their Creator, the followers of the superstition we now treat of, were, indeed, grievously culpable. Yet, it must be conceded, that the error which the people of the East served was of a more refined and sublimated character than that which ordinarily prevailed in the regions of the West. From many of the gross and revolting ordinances, by which the other forms of Paganism were defiled, the Eastern ritual appears to have been exempt; nor did it supply the same strong incentives to passion, which, in other countries, the prevailing system of Idolatry usually administered.

This sketch of the peculiar superstition practised in the East exhibits the more prominent features of the worship received in Ireland, before the Gospel had been there disseminated. In the Irish, as well as in the Eastern ritual, the veneration of fire held an important place. From the history of St. Patrick's mission we learn, that the attention of the Irish monarch was first attracted towards the Saint, by the apparent temerity of the holy man in lighting up a fire within view of the royal residence, at a period, when to do so was forbidden by the ceremonial of the national superstition.† The strong predilection of the Irish people for this worship, may be inferred, from the earnestness with which St. Patrick laboured to detach them from it. With a dignity and eloquence worthy of his sacred character, the Apostle of Ireland denounces, in his con-

* Vid. Prideaux' Connection, part 1, chap. 4.
† Second Life, c. 34. Probus, l. I, c. 35.

fessions, the perversity, which gave to a creature the homage due to Him alone, from whom the universe, and whatsoever the universe contains, derive their origin and perfection. "For," says he, "that sun which we behold rises each day for our benefit by the order of God; but that sun shall not reign, nor shall his splendour endure for ever. But all who adore him are wretched, and shall be subjected to punishment. For us, we believe and adore the true sun, who is Christ."*

Of the superstition which prevailed among the Irish people, before their conversion to Christianity, some vestiges, it is said, may be yet traced in the island. Among these are reckoned the round towers, some of which still outlive the decay of time and the violence of the tempest. These structures, it has been asserted by writers† conversant with the antiquities of Ireland, were once temples sacred to the divinity of fire. The probability of the assertion is strengthened by this circumstance—that in the East similar structures‡ have been recently discovered, in which, it appears certain, that the adoration of fire was formerly celebrated.

With the worship of fire the Irish people appear to have blended that of some other supposed deities. Indeed, a similar admixture of different superstitions is discernible in the history of almost every Pagan country. The unhappy influence which first seduced man from the adoration of the true God, conducted him, unceasingly, from one error to another still more gross and more revolting. Nor can this be deemed strange, if we reflect on the source whence idolatry emanated — the corruption of the human heart. No Idol was ever adored until some passion, to which

* Confess. p. 22. † Vallancey, Lanigan, &c.
‡ Vid. Valentia's Voyages and Travels. vol. 1, p. 85.

it bore a real or fancied analogy, had been first honoured in the human breast, and had acquired there an ascendancy that obscured the light of reason. The indulgence of any passion, while it weakens the powers of reason, and obscures the distinction between vice and virtue, impels its victim to the gratification of other inordinate propensities. In proportion as the passions of men multiplied and became violent, a corresponding increase occurred in the number of Pagan deities; till, at length, the vilest objects in creation were deemed worthy of religious homage. But though, in the multiplication of its divinities, the superstition received in Ireland resembled that of other countries, yet the objects of public adoration in that island were not "the works of the hands of men," but more commonly some ideal incorporeal beings, to which the fervour of imagination ascribed the attributes of the divinity. Some rude memorials, indeed, that bore a certain relation to the deities they venerated, the Irish people appear to have at least partially used. But idols, such as were ordinarily employed in the Pagan worship, had no place in the superstition adopted throughout the Island.*

* Unde colligendum Hibernorum numina fuisse deos topicos, scilicet, montanos, campestres, fluviales.... et id genus alios locorum genios.—Ogygia, part 3, c. 22.

CHAPTER II.

Narrative of the principal circumstances connected with the missions of Palladius and St. Patrick—Death of Palladius—St. Patrick appointed to succeed him.

Before his ascension into heaven, the Divine Legislator of the new dispensation was careful to instruct his Apostles, how his church was to be administered, after He should have departed from them. In the belief of the Catholic church it was ordained by her Holy Founder, that while each bishop watched over the spiritual interests of his own particular flock, the guardianship of the entire sheepfold should be confided to one Supreme Pastor—the successor of St. Peter in the Apostolic See. To this the lawful representative of the Prince of Apostles, the duty of watching over those sheep, who had already heard the Shepherd's voice was especially entrusted. But the charity of the Redeemer admonished him to whom the chief pastoral dignity was confided, that there were other sheep who were to be brought within the fold, that there might be but the "one sheepfold and the one shepherd." To cause these sheep to hear the Shepherd's voice, and to conduct them into the mysterious fold of the church, the zeal of the most exalted in the Christian ministry was to be unceasingly exerted. Of the fidelity with which the

Pontiffs who succeeded St. Peter in the Roman See complied with this important duty, the records of ecclesiastical antiquity make honourable mention. To the provident solicitude of the Roman Pontiffs, the Church of Ireland is indebted for the success, which attended the first dissemination of the Gospel seed in our island.

During the pontificate of Celestine, intelligence reached the eternal city, that the tidings of man's redemption had been received with joy by some of the inhabitants of Ireland. The zeal of Celestine for the cause of religion was immediately awakened. He looked around for a Pastor, to whom the interests of the rising church might be confided. His attention was soon fixed on Palladius. Palladius was, it is conjectured, a native of Britain, and had received the holy order of Deaconship. By his exertions, German of Auxerre, and Lupus of Troyes had been sent to Britain, to check the progress of Pelagianism in that country. The connexion that was thus formed between Palladius and those pastors of the British Church who supported his exertions against Pelagianism, gave him an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the state of religion in Ireland. It cannot, moreover, be doubted, that St. Celestine was desirous to station in the vicinity of Britain an ecclesiastic, who had evinced so much zeal for repressing the growth of heresy in that island. But whatever may have been the motives which influenced the decision of the Pope, it is certain, that Palladius was the object of his choice. To the choice of the Holy Father, Palladius yielded immediate obedience. As yet, however, he had been initiated only in Deacon's orders. Before he could enter on the discharge of the important duties now confided to him, it was necessary, that he should be promoted to the superior dignity of Bishop. With his own hands, the Supreme Pontiff

conferred upon him the rite of episcopal consecration.* After his consecration, Palladius set out for Ireland in company with some missionaries,† whose zeal impelled them to co-operate in the conversion of the Irish people. Before he departed from Rome, he was presented by St. Celestine with a copy of the Sacred Scriptures, and a portion of the relics of St. Peter and St. Paul.‡

In his journey, nothing deserving particular attention is stated to have occurred. He arrived in Ireland about the commencement of the year 431. The coast which skirts the confines of the Counties of Wicklow and Wexford, was that to which the vessel of Palladius directed her course; but the particular spot where the holy man disembarked cannot at this remote period be accurately determined. Having landed without opposition, he immediately announced the object he had in view. The opening of his mission promised a favourable result to his labours. Some of the natives were at once gained over to the Gospel, and Palladius had the happiness of initiating these in the sacred rite of Baptism.

The next care of the holy missionary was to provide suitable places of worship for the neophytes, where they might unite together in the discharge of their religious obligations. With this view, Palladius erected three churches in the vicinity of the place, where his missionary career was first opened. In one of these churches he placed the sacred relics, which, at his departure from Rome, he had received from St. Celestine. Together with these relics,

* Second Life of St. Patrick, cap. 24.

† The names of four of these missionaries, viz. Silvester, Solonius, Augustin and Benedict, are mentioned in some of the Lives of St. Patrick. Second Life. Jocelin, cap. 25. Usher, p. 812.

‡ Second Life of St. Patrick, cap. 24.

were deposited the writing tablets* which Palladius used, and which served, it is probable, to record the principal events of his mission, and those instructions to the clergy, which he judged necessary to regulate their exertions in the cause of the Gospel.

But by this time, the cheering prospects which attended the opening of Palladius' mission began to wear a lowering aspect. The success of his first missionary efforts had aroused from indifference the guardians of the national superstition, and alarmed them for its safety. Without delay, they repair to one of their native princes, by name Nathi, and denounce Palladius, as a suspicious and dangerous innovator. Unfortunately, the Prince was already disposed to receive the impression, which the enemies of religion wished to make upon him, and he immediately ordered Palladius to leave the country. To this arbitrary mandate Palladius thought it necessary to yield a prompt compliance. Disobedience, he feared, would draw down on him the vengeance of the chieftain, and endanger the safety of the other missionaries and of the natives who had been converted to Christianity. His retirement from the island might, on the other hand, sooth the anger of Nathi, and relax the vigilance of the adversaries of the Gospel.

But, though Palladius was forced to yield to the superior power of his opponents, his charity for the natives who had been introduced by him into the Christian fold forbad him to leave the island, until he had provided against the danger, to which these would be exposed to in his absence. To give effect to his pastoral solicitude, he prudently resolved to select from among his associates those whom he judged best qualified, to succour the necessities of the

* Second Life of St. Patrick, c. 24.

rising church. Having confided to this chosen band* the care of his spiritual children, Palladius, attended by his other companions, quitted Ireland about the close of the year 431—the same year, in which he had commenced his apostolic labours in that country. After a long and dangerous passage, he landed on the northern coast of Britain. From Britain it was his intention to proceed to Rome. But his design was frustrated by sickness, occasioned, it is probable, by fatigue, and by the anxiety which he suffered on account of the unfavourable termination of his mission in Ireland. The place where Palladius landed was situated in the vicinity of Fordun,† a small town in Kincardinshire. Here he was seized with his last illness. After a short struggle, his constitution sank beneath the violence of the disease, and he expired on the twenty-seventh day of January, in the year four hundred and thirty-two.‡

The scanty records of Palladius' biography supply but an imperfect outline of his character. Of his zeal in the cause of religion, his exertions to have St. Germanus deputed to Britain, and the alacrity with which he engaged in the conversion of the Irish people, afford the most convincing proofs. That besides religious zeal, Palladius possessed other useful qualifications for the important part, which he was called to take in the Christian ministry, cannot be questioned. Yet it must be conceded, especially if we contrast Palladius with St. Patrick, his successor in the

* Silvester and Solonius are stated by all our writers to have remained in Ireland after Palladius. To these missionaries some writers join Agustin and Benedict.

† Et cum ad suos reverti statuisset, morbo correptus in terra Cruthiniorum sive Pictorum decessit. Colgan Trip. L. 1, c. 38.

Defunctus est in loco qui dicitur Fordun.—Second Life of St. Patrick, c. 24.

‡ Anglican Martyology and Ferraius Catal.—Colgan Tr. Th. p. 18.

Apostleship of Ireland, that the former entered on the Irish mission under many disadvantages, which must have prejudiced the success of his undertaking. With the character of the Irish people, and the state of religion in Ireland before his arrival there, Palladius was, indeed, we may presume, pretty accurately acquainted. But he had not, like St. Patrick, grown up among the people whom he sought to convert, and he was unacquainted with those peculiar traits in the national character, with which a long residence in Ireland had rendered St. Patrick familiar. Hence, he entered on his mission, a stranger to the habits and language of the nation, and unsustained by the natural introductory commendations to the affection and confidence of a people. It is not then surprising, that Palladius should have found himself impeded by many circumstances, which did not embarrass the exertions of his successor. Neither does Palladius appear to have been remarkable for that moral intrepidity of character, which was indispensably requisite in one, who entered on so arduous an enterprise, as the conversion of an idolatrous country. The very instant, that he perceived the storm of persecution gathering, without attempting to undeceive Nathi, or calm the apprehensions which had been excited in the Prince's mind, Palladius retired from the impending danger, and yielded an easy victory to his adversaries.

After the death of Palladius, his companions proceeded to Gaul. There having sought out the abode of Patrick, on whom the Apostleship of Ireland now devolved,* they inform

* "Necdum tamen vir Domini Patricius ad Pontificalem gradum fuerat promotus; quod ideo nimirum distulerat, quia sciebat quod Palladius archidiaconus Celestini ordinatus abeodem Papa directus fuerat ad hanc insulam." Probus L. 1. c. 24.

These words imply that the promotion of Patrick was to follow, as a matter of course, the death of Palladius.

him of Palladius' decease.* Some time elapsed, since St. Patrick had been appointed to co-operate in the conversion of the Irish people. But, circumstances with which we are, at present, unacquainted, detained him in Gaul, after Palladius had gone to Ireland. The important place which St. Patrick occupies in the history of the Irish church, will render his biography peculiarly interesting.

In fixing the exact period and place of an event so remote as the birth of St. Patrick, the reader will naturally anticipate some discrepancy among our ancient annalists. Indeed, were the numerous narratives of St. Patrick's life to accord entirely with each other, the coincidence would be singularly remarkable. In every department of history, discrepancies frequently occur in the relation of the circumstances connected with any particular event. Such discrepancies, so far from rendering dubious the history of the event which they regard, must be oftentimes reckoned among the characters, that distinguish an authentic narrative from the creations of fiction.

From the different periods to which the birth of St. Patrick has been assigned by his biographers, I shall select that date, which best accords with the subsequent parts of his history. The year 432, the Irish annalists almost unanimously assert, was the epoch in which St. Patrick opened his apostolic mission in Ireland. It was in this year also, that the saint was raised to the episcopal dignity.

With his advancement to the episcopal dignity a circumstance is connected from which we may ascertain the period when St. Patrick was born. Whilst he was yet

* "Audients itaque de morte Palladii archidiaconi, discipuli illius, qui erant in Britanniis, id est, Augustinus, Benedictus, et ceteri venerunt ad St. Patricium in Euboriam, et mortem Palladii ei denunciabant." Probus L. 1. C. 25. Second Life, C. 26. Fourth Life, C. 31.

a boy, he was unhappily hurried away by passion to the commission of some fault. What this fault was, the biographers of the saint do not mention. That it was not, however, a merely venial transgression, appears by the advantage which was afterwards taken of it, to oppose his consecration. With the knowledge of his fault, one person only was acquainted, and it was in the confidence of friendship, that St. Patrick had revealed his misfortune to that individual. Thirty years had now elapsed, since the offence had been committed, and the saint had since endeavoured, by the most exemplary penance, to expiate his guilt. But neither his youth—for he was in his fifteenth year only, when he unfortunately yielded to passion—nor the ample penance which he had performed, could induce the person, to whom this transgression was known, to abstain from denouncing it as an impediment to St. Patrick's consecration.* Happily, the denunciation did not succeed. For a short time, indeed, it appears to have caused the saint to defer his consecration, but eventually every opposition was withdrawn, and he was advanced to the episcopal dignity.

The consecration of St. Patrick, as has been stated, is referred to the year 432. At the period of his consecration, he had attained the forty-fifth year of his age: Hence the year 387 must have been that in which the Apostle of Ireland was born.†

The inquiry on the birth place of St. Patrick has occasioned much controversy among writers on the ecclesiastical history of Ireland. While some of these writers have asserted for Scotland, and others for England, the honour of having given birth to St. Patrick, a third class has pronounced, that this glory belongs to France. To the

* See Confess. pp. 10, 11, 12, 14, &c.

† Tillemont Memoires &c. Tom 16, St. Patrice. Act. 2, Notes.

last named class of historians, it must be conceded, that they have obviated many of the difficulties, to which the opinions of the writers who dissent from them are exposed. Neither are the merits of the opinion which represents France as the birth place of St. Patrick, of a merely negative character. On the contrary, the positive arguments in favour of it are numerous and weighty. In his narrative of St. Patrick's life, Probus* relates, that the saint, during his captivity in Ireland, was sold, in order that he might be conveyed to France. Before the saint departed from Ireland, an angel is represented as appearing to him, inviting him to return to his inheritance in the country from which the inhumanity of his captors had withdrawn him. In effect the same writer states, that St. Patrick was conveyed to Gaul, and he also describes this country as the birth place of the saint. Nor is it on one occasion only, that Probus leads his readers to the inference, that St. Patrick was born in Gaul. A second time also, when speaking of the saint's captivity, he introduces certain observations on that event, which point out Gaul as the native place of the saint. To the argument drawn from the authority of Probus, we may add that which St. Patrick's own narrative of his captivity supplies. This narrative recounts, in such a manner,† the circumstances connected with the saint's deliverance, as favours the conclusion to which the history of Probus would conduct us.

We have, in the next place, to inquire, in what particular part of Gaul the Apostle of Ireland was born. The evidence that applies to this question, if not entirely satisfactory, is yet such as may be assented to without

* L. I, c. 13, 14.
† Confess. sub. init. &c.

temerity. Acording to this evidence, Bononia, now Bulogne-sur-mer, was the part of Gaul in which St. Patrick was born. The place where his father resided, St. Patrick distinguishes by the name of Bonavem Taberniæ.* The first part of this appellation is synonymous with Bononia†—the name by which Boulogne is designated in the Latin language.

In the vicinity of Bonavem, or Bononia, the once celebrated town of Tarabanna‡ was situated. From the town, the adjoining district received the appellation of Pagus Tarabanensis. Within the precincts of this district Bononia was included, and hence it was distinguished from other places of the same name, by the adjunct Tarabanna, Tavernia or Tabernia—for by a usage, of which many examples might be quoted, the orthography of the same word could have been thus varied.

The district to which Bononia belonged was itself a portion of the territory, which was formerly known by the name of Armorica.§ It was in this part of Gaul, the most esteemed biographers of St. Patrick tell us, that the saint abode, at the period of his first captivity. And the saint himself informs us, that the place where he was made captive adjoined to the residence of his family.

Of his family, St. Patrick has left us, in his writings, only an imperfect account. Once, indeed, the peculiar emergency under which he addressed a letter to Coroticus, a Pagan prince, induced the saint to allude rather particularly to his relations. On this occasion, he describes their rank in society as respectable, and such as qualified them to share

* Confess. sub init.

† Baxter. Glossar. A. A. Britan ad Bonium.

‡ The place where the ruins of this town yet remains is called Terouanne.

§ Lobineau. Histoire de Bretagne, vol. 2. p. 7, states, that the country of the Morini, in which Boulogne stood, was included in Armorica.

in the honours, then attached to civic or municipal functions. His father, Calpurnius, was the son of a priest named Potitus, and had himself received the holy order of Deaconship. According to the laws of the empire, his father and grand father, by engaging in the sacred ministry, had forfeited the privileges to which they were entitled by inheritance. But, owing, we may presume, either to a relaxation of these enactments, or to some particular indulgence, the family of St. Patrick were not deprived of their hereditary privileges. That the family of the saint were of Roman origin, is sufficiently indicated by the peculiar form of their names. Indeed, in his letter to Coroticus, St. Patrick refers to the Romans as to his fellow-citizens.

Of Conchessa, the mother of St. Patrick, and of the other members of his family, but little that is autheutic has been preserved. That Conchessa was born in some part of Gaul is all that can be certainly stated regarding her. On her family connexions, our ancient annalists are wholly silent. This silence sufficiently refutes the assertion of the writers, who state, that she was nearly allied to St. Martin, the illustrious Bishop of Tours. For, it cannot be supposed, that a connexion so honourable, and which, if it existed, must have been generally known, could have been passed over in silence by persons, who must have been eager to mention whatever could exalt the character of St. Patrick with posterity.

To the preceding account of St. Patrick's family, it may be objected, that, if we credit some writers, the kinsfolk of the saint were numerous in Ireland. And as it cannot be supposed, that his relations would have abandoned their domestic comforts, in Gaul, to follow the fortunes of a missionary in a barbarous country, it is probable, that they were natives, if not of Ireland, at least of some place

immediately adjoining to that island. But, that these writers were misled, can be shown from the writings, which the saint himself has left us. Among the many privations, to which St. Patrick's mission subjected him, he feelingly recounts his separation from his friends—a separation so entire, as to bereave him of the pleasure even of seeing any member of his family. The severity of this privation the saint a second time refers to in his confessions, and, on the same occasion, he expresses his anxious desire, to behold once again, those whom the ties of kindred had strongly endeared to him. Had St. Patrick been consoled by the presence of the many friends, with whom, in the opinion now combated, he must have daily conversed, he could not have felt his separation so acutely, nor would he have so anxiously longed to revisit Gaul.

Of the early part of St. Patrick's life, up to the period of his captivity, nothing deserving of particular notice is recorded. That during the first portion of his life, he was not distinguished for extraordinary piety, the saint himself confesses. But from the tepidity of his early youth, the hardships of captivity quickly awakened him. "Before I was humbled," exclaims the holy man, "I know, in truth, that I was as the stone, which lieth deep in the mire; and He, that is all powerful, came, and, in His mercy, raised me up."* Thus, in the admirable dispensations of Providence, the people, whom St. Patrick was to rescue from infidelity, were ordained, to be first the occasion of his deliverance from religious tepidity, and of the eminent sanctity which he afterwards attained.

At the period of his captivity, St. Patrick had not completed the sixteenth year of his age. In 403, the date to which the saint's first captivity is assigned, Niell, an Irish

* Confess. p. 5.

Prince, leaving his native shores, in company with a daring band of his countrymen, ravaged successively the coasts of Britain and of Gaul.

In France, the vicinity of Boulogne was the theatre which he selected for the execution of his lawless enterprise. Two hundred of the natives, among whom was St. Patrick, fell into the hands of Niell, and were detained by him in captivity.* The captives, indeed, were brought in triumph to Ireland, but the chieftian never again revisited his native country. Eochaid, a prince of the royal house of Leinster, had long entertained a hostile and revengeful feeling against Niell. An opportunity to gratify his vengeance was not long wanting. It chanced, on a certain day, that while Eochaid walked along the banks of the river Liana, he perceived his adversary standing on the opposite side. Impatient of delay, he discharged a poisoned arrow at the unfortunate Niell. The arrow reached its destined victim, and consigned him speedily to the tomb.†

The followers of Niell prepared now to return home. On their arrival in Ireland, St. Patrick was sold as a slave. The fidelity of the youthful captive, in discharging the humble offices assigned to him, attracted the notice of Milcho, one of the four brothers in whose service the saint was engaged. At the request of Milcho, Patrick was transferred to his dominion exclusively,‡

Dalradia, situated in the County of Antrim, was the place where the saint's master resided.§ To his young bondsman, Milcho consigned here the care of tending his sheep.¶ At

* Keating's History of Ireland, b. 1, pp. 149 and 156.

† A. D. 406. Colgan Tr. Th. p. 442. By Doctor Lanigan, Niell's death is referred to the year 404.

‡ Second Life, cap. 12.

§ Fiech's Scholiast. Schol. 8. Second Life, cap. 12.

¶ Confess. p. 6.

Patrick's tender age, the labour and humiliation of such an occupation must have been peculiarly distressing. But amidst the hardships of servitude, one resource remained, from which the holy youth drew abundant consolation. His duties were, it is true, at once humble and painful, but they allowed him ample leisure for prayer and meditation. In the solitude to which his employment confined him, he called to mind and wept over the thoughtlessness and tepidity of his early youth. The benedictions which the Almighty had heretofore poured upon him he now began to appreciate as they deserved. "And there," says the saint, speaking of his captivity,* "the Lord made me sensible of my incredulity, that I might, though late, call my transgressions to remembrance, and be converted to the Lord my God, who hath regarded my humility, and hath commiserated my youth and my ignorance.

I daily tended the flocks, and during the day I prayed frequently; the love and fear of God advanced in me more and more, and his faith and spirit increased within me, so that I prayed a hundred times in the day, and almost as often in the night; I remained in the woods and on the mountains, and I arose before the dawning of the light to prayer, amidst the snow, the frost, and the rain, and I suffered not any injury in consequence; neither did sloth at all retard me, because the Holy Spirit was fervent within me."†

Having passed about six years‡ in these holy exercises, the period destined for his liberation was now at hand. The time he had spent in servitude sufficed to prove the sincerity of his repentance, and to confirm him in the

* Confess. pp. 1, 2. † Confess. p. 6.

‡ Fiech's hym, the Tripartie, and other accounts agree, that the saint's captivity continued for six full years.

virtues necessary for the exalted station which he was soon to occupy in the sacred ministry. We have from the saint's own pen the narrative of his deliverance. He tells us, that while he lay asleep in the night, he was addressed in the following words:—"Thou fastest well, and art soon to return to thine own country."* After a short interval, the same voice, a second time, thus accosted him. "Behold the ship is ready for you." This ship, the saint informs us, lay then in a harbour, distant two hundred miles from his place of abode, and in a part of the island which he had never seen, and where there was no person with whom he was acquainted. Trusting, however, in that Providence, which, after having called him to repentance, now so mercifully interposed in his behalf, Patrick left his master's house, and began his journey to the port, from which he was to embark for his native land. "And I came,"† says the saint, "in the power of the Lord, who directed my course to a good end, and I entertained no fear, until I arrived at the place where the ship lay. The ship was then clearing out, and I asked for a passage in her. The master of the vessel became angry, and said to me—'Do not pretend to come with us.' On hearing this, I retired, for the purpose of going to the cabin, where I had been received as a guest, and while going thither, I began to pray. But before I had finished my prayer, I heard one of the men crying out with a loud voice after me—'Come quickly, for they are calling you;' and immediately I returned. And they said to me—'Come, we receive thee on faith; be our friend, just as it may be agreeable to you.' We then set sail, and after three days reached land."

* Confess. p. 8.

† For this account of the saint's liberation, see his Confession, and Probus L. 1. c. 4.

Treguier, in Britanny, is stated to be the harbour to which the ship directed her course; and there, after a favourable voyage, St. Patrick disembarked.* Treguier lay at a considerable distance from the saint's native residence, and the country through which he was to pass on his journey homewards, being, in many places, uncultivated and destitute of inhabitants, supplied only a scanty and precarious subsistence to the traveller. This desolation was occasioned by the war, of which Gaul had been then the theatre for two centuries. So far back as the close of the third century, the northern coasts of Gaul were repeatedly ravaged by successive hordes of Franks and Saxons. In the commencement of the fifth century, the Vandals, the Alans, and the Suevi, traversed, in countless multitudes, the provinces of Gaul, and spread devastation wheresoever they passed. This calamity was followed by the yet more desolating evil of civil war;† and at the period when St. Patrick returned home, his country was still suffering from these multiplied afflictions. That part of the country were his family resided, particularly experienced the injurious effects of the warfare, by which the fairest provinces of the kingdom were laid waste. Thousands of his countrymen, the saint informs us,‡ were carried into captivity, and dispersed among the various nations of the universe. In consequence of the misery which was thus brought on his native land, St. Patrick, besides the other privations which he suffered, had, in journeying homewards, to endure much from hunger also.

* Fiech, and the Scholiast are the writers on whose authority it is shown, that St. Patrick landed in Gaul. Two breviaries of Rheims point out Treguier as the place where the saint disembarked.

† Tilemont. Mem. tom. 10, p. 555. Ruinart, Annal. Franc.

‡ Confess. pp. 1, 2.

From the narrative which the saint has left us of this journey, it appears, that some of those, who had sailed with him from Ireland, accompanied him from Treguier to his native home. These men had heard of the Christian religion, but they still adhered to the Pagan superstition. They had also heard of the power of the God whom the Christians worshipped; and, when suffering from extreme hunger, they were induced by what they had heard, to solicit St. Patrick, to pray for relief to the God whom he adored. "Christian"—thus the chief of the party addressed the saint—"what dost thou say? Thy God is great and all-powerful. Why then, cans't thou not pray for us, as we are in such danger of famine?" In reply, St. Patrick exhorted the chief and his associates to faith and sincere repentance, and enlarged on the greatness of the true God, whose almighty power could, in an instant, supply them with food in abundance. The saint then offered up a fervent prayer, in favour of his companions. His prayer was accepted, and immediate relief granted to them. A drove of swine having appeared in sight soon after Patrick had poured forth his supplication to heaven, many of them were killed, and a plentiful supply of food was thus obtained. The fatigue and hunger which Patrick and his companions had hitherto endured, made them now long for the enjoyment of some repose. To gratify this desire, they remained during two nights in the place, where their wants had been so opportunely relieved. Neither were they unmindful of their obligations to the Divine goodness. With becoming gratitude they returned thanks for His mercy, and continued afterwards to evince their sense of the favour conferred on them, by an assiduous attention to the saint, through whose prayers God had been moved to compassionate their misery.

One instance of this attention is mentioned by St. Patrick, which, on account of the singular occurrence that followed, deserves to be noticed. It chanced, that during the journey some wild honey was discovered by them, and they requested St. Patrick to partake of it. Before, however, the saint had time to comply with the request, one of the party exclaimed—"This is an offering, thanks to God." The exclamation alarmed the piety of the holy youth; for it was uttered by a Gentile, who seemed to connect the eating of the honey with the superstition of Paganism. Unwilling to do anything, which might appear to sanction a false worship, Patrick at once refused to participate of the offering.* His refusal was followed by an occurrence of an extraordinary nature. While he lay asleep in the night, it was the night of the same day on which the honey was presented to him, Satan fell on him, like a stone of ponderous weight, and by the fall deprived him entirely of strength. Alarmed at his situation, the saint, with all his might, invoked the assistance of Elias.† A splendour like that of the sun, shone forthwith around him, and awakened him from the torpor by which he was oppressed. During the rest of his journey, nothing worthy of particular notice seems to have occurred. At length, after an absence of almost seven years, the saint reached his native place in safety.

But the joy which the deliverance of the saint gave his family, was not to continue long. A misfortune, like that which had before bereaved them of his society, again interrupted their happiness. The peace of his native country, at the period of St. Patrick's return home, was unceasingly disturbed, at one time, by civil strife, at another, by the incursions of marauders, who infested the confines

* Confess. p. 8.
† Confess. p. 8.

of Gaul. From this unfortunate condition of the native country of the saint, it is probable, that the second captivity of the saint should be ascribed to one of those marauding parties, who not content with pillage, carried into slavery such of the inhabitants as fell into their hands. The second captivity of the saint was, however, but of short duration. After an interval of about sixty days, he regained his liberty, and was once more restored to the embraces of his friends.*

The captivity of St. Patrick had excluded him, during the most precious portion of his youth, from the benefits of education. He was now deeply sensible of the loss, and he resolved to repair it. The fame of the seminary erected by St. Martin† at Tours, directed his attention to that establishment. This institution comprised every advantage, which, to one disposed as St. Patrick was, must have appeared desirable. To a becoming attention to literary pursuits, its discipline joined the assiduous cultivation of the Gospel virtues. From the narrative of Sulpitius Severus‡ we learn, that the members of this sacred asylum joined to the practice of the monastic duties, the education of candidates for the service of the altar. To the austere discipline prescribed by the holy founder, each candidate was required to yield a ready obedience. In his code of laws, St. Martin was careful to enjoin those observances, by which the propensity of youth to vain or sensual gratification might be repressed. Dress, religion inculcates, was ordained to veil the deformity caused by original guilt, and to employ it for the indulgence of vanity, would be to divert it from its appointed end to another and

* Confess. p. 9.

† Baronius ad an. 328, num. 22.

‡ De vita S. Martini, cap. 7.

a perverse purpose. To each of its followers, the Gospel proposed this measure of perfection. From those, however, who aspired to eminence in sanctity, the religious code of St. Martin required the exercise of a yet more austere virtue. The simplicity of his habit, the young ecclesiastic was admonished, should be free not only from ostentation, but should, moreover, evince his perfect detachment from the world, and his disregard for the things which the world esteems.

But if it was important, that the candidate for the holy ministry should learn, that his dress ought to accord with the severe sanctity of his character, it was not of less moment to teach him betimes to repress the cravings of sensuality. Were man ordained for the same end, as the irrational part of the creation, he might then, perhaps, seek for the gratification of his sensual appetite. But a more noble destiny awaited him. He was formed, so religion proclaimed, after the image and likeness of God, and was destined to enjoy, throughout eternity, the presence of his Creator. That a being designed for so exalted an end, should be the slave of his animal propensities, would both dishonour his nature, and degrade him from the lofty pre-eminence which he enjoyed in the order of creation. In his present condition, food was indeed necessary for man's subsistence. But the voice of religion united with his own native dignity, in admonishing him to remain content with what was sufficient to satisfy his wants. If he transgressed these limits, the indulgence, instead of assisting him in the attainment of his high destiny, would trouble the serenity of his soul, obscure the brightness of his intellectual vision, and unfit him for the exertion of his noblest faculties.

To impress these sublime truths on the youth who aspired to the sanctuary, St. Martin carefully excluded from table

every incentive to inordinate gratification. Wine he particularly denounced, as a superfluous and dangerous indulgence; and by an express regulation, he forbad the use of it to his disciples. Notwithstanding the austerity of his discipline, the seminary at Tours was resorted to, by many youth belonging to the noblest families in Gaul. The exact conformity of these young aspirants after sanctity to all the regulations of the institution, and their cheerfulness in submitting to the severest privations, have been recorded in terms of just commendation by a contemporary writer.*

It was to this holy retreat that St. Patrick retired, and for the space of four years, his virtue was sheltered in this asylum of piety and learning. At the end of that term, St. Patrick returned home. His parents, overjoyed at his return, conjured him never again to deprive them of the happiness which his society afforded them. They dwelt on the many afflictions to which he was subjected in captivity, and besought him not to expose himself any more to similar misfortunes.

But the period now approached, when the counsels of the Divine wisdom ordained, that Patrick was to abandon for ever his native home. The merciful designs of Providence in favour of the Irish people were, the saint informs us, revealed to him in a vision during the silence of the night. It was in this way also, that the Apostle of the Gentiles was invited to anounce the Gospel in Macedonia. "And a vision was showed to Paul in the night, which was a man of Macedonia standing and beseeching him and saying: "Pass over into Macedonia, and help us.' "† The narrative of what occurred in a like manifestation of the Divine will to St. Patrick, the saint relates in the following words: "And I saw,

* Sulpitius Severus De vita Sancti Martini.
† Acts, c. 16.

says the saint, in a nocturnal vision, a man, whose name was Victorius,* coming, as if from Ireland, with numberless letters, one of which he handed to me. On reading the commencement of it, I found that it contained these words: 'The voice of the Irish.' And while reading, I thought that I heard, at the same moment, the voice of persons from near the wood of Foclut,† which adjoins the western sea. And they cried out, as if with one voice: 'We entreat thee, O holy youth, to come and walk still amongst us.' And I was greatly affected in my heart, and could read no longer; then I awoke."‡

It was, we may presume, this extraordinary revelation, which, soon after, induced the saint to leave again his paternal abode, that he might prepare to correspond to the Divine vocation. But before he engaged in so arduous an enterprise as that which now occupied his attention, he felt that much deliberation was required. Were he to trust entirely to the suggestions of his own spirit, vanity or ambition might perhaps tempt him to embark in an undertaking, for which he was not qualified. Were he, on the contrary, to be guided by the wise counsels of an enlightened and disinterested adviser, he might reasonably hope, that his final determination would be in accordance with the will of heaven. The question on which he was now called to decide, was one of the utmost importance with regard to his own spiritual interests, and to those of an unnumbered multitude of his fellow-men. On such a question, the danger of a rash or precipitate decision could

* An illustrious saint of this name, preached the Gospel to the Morini, and became afterwards Bishop of Rouen.

† This wood is said to have been in Tirawley, in the county of Mayo.—Scholiast.

‡ Confess. p. 9.

not be too cautiously provided against. The saint resolved, therefore, to confide the guidance of his future conduct to a director, on whose mature wisdom he might securely rely. Such a person he hoped to find in Germanus, the illustrious Bishop of Auxerre.

The extraordinary character of St. Germanus of Auxerre, fixed at this time, the attention of his countrymen upon him.* In early life, Germanus had attained at the Roman bar a high reputation for eloquence and professional knowledge. The fame which he had thus acquired, together with a matrimonial alliance with a distinguished family at Rome, introduced him to the notice of the Emperor Honorius. After having been honoured with various appointments at Rome, Germanus was at length preferred to the high office of Duke in his own native province. The moral character of Germanus, at the period when he was exalted to this important station, was not, indeed, tarnished by any gross or degrading passion. But, he was yet a stranger to the perfection of Christian virtue. For the pleasures of the chase he cherished so strong an attachment, that success in the pursuit of them caused him to indulge in excessive joy. But his joy, if confined to himself alone, could have afforded him only partial gratification, and vanity prompted him to have his triumphs in the chase proclaimed to the inhabitants of Auxerre. For this purpose, he was accustomed to suspend from a great tree, that stood in the centre of Auxerre, the heads of the wild beasts which he had slain. A usage very similar prevailed, it appears, among the people of Auxerre, before they had been converted to Christianity. At that time, however, the usage was not celebrated merely for the indulgence of vanity. It was, on

* Vid. Fleury Hist. Eccles. L. 23.

the contrary then viewed as a species of religious ceremony, which the inhabitants performed in honour of the deities whom they worshipped. Alarmed at the revival of a rite thus closely connected with Pagan superstition, Amator, Bishop of Auxerre, denounced the celebration of the custom as injurious to religion. The remonstrances of Amator were, however, unavailing. Germanus could not be persuaded, that an indulgence, so harmless in itself, contained anything disrespectful to the Christian faith. The Bishop finding that Germanus remained unchanged, resorted to an expedient, from which he anticipated a more favourable result. It happened, that Germanus was then absent from Auxerre. Availing himself of this circumstance, Amator ordered the tree to be cut down, from which depended the trophies of Germanus' achievements. Soon after, the Duke returned to Auxerre, and was informed of what Amator had done. The news roused him into fury. He poured forth the most bitter invectives against the bishop, and even openly avowed his determination to take revenge. Alarmed at these menaces, Amator judged it prudent to withdraw from Auxerre, until the rage of Germanus should have subsided. During his retirement, the bishop was favoured with a revelation of a singular and unexpected import. The very man from whose wrath he was forced to flee, was, according to this extraordinary revelation, destined to be Amator's successor in the see of Auxerre. Astonished and delighted at so wonderful a dispensation of the Divine Providence, Amator communicated, without delay, the intelligence of what had occurred to Julius, the Prefect of Gaul.

The sanction of the Prefect was then required by the civil law, before a bishop could confer even the clerical tonsure on any officer, who was engaged in the service of the empire.

The consent of Julius having been obtained, Amator availed himself of the earliest opportunity, to initiate Germanus in the sacred ministry. It chanced, that on a certain occasion, Germanus entered the church, at the same time that Amator was present there. Profiting of this auspicious occurrence, Amator immediately ordered the doors of the church to be closed. As soon as his orders were executed, the bishop made known to Germanus the strange revelation with which heaven had favoured him—that Germanus was to be his successor in the see of Auxerre. Fearing to oppose the Divine Will, which had been manifested in so surprising a way, Germanus first received the clerical tonsure, and was then advanced to the holy order of Deaconship. The death of St. Amator happening soon after, Germanus, at the unanimous desire both of the clergy and the people, was raised to the government of the vacant see. From the moment of his consecration, Germanus entered on the practice of the most perfect virtue. During the long period of thirty years, for which he presided over the church of Auxerre, his manner of life was distinguished for extraordinary austerity. For this protracted term, he entirely abstained from the use of wheaten bread, of wine, and of everything that might be an incentive to sensuality. Nor was he less distinguished for the other sublime virtues, that shed a lustre on the sacred ministry. His property Germanus entirely devoted to the service of God, and to the relief of the poor. Being thus freed from every worldly incumbrance, he consecrated all his time to the faithful discharge of his sacred functions, regarding every other concern as foreign from the end, for which he had been called to the holy ministry.

Such was the man, by whose counsel St. Patrick pro-

posed to regulate his future conduct. In obedience to the instructions of this holy prelate, Patrick went again into retirement, in order to prepare himself for the arduous enterprise which he was about to undertake. Lerins, so justly celebrated for the many distinguished bishops whom it gave to the Church, appears to be the place, which, on this occasion, St. Patrick chose for his retreat. It was in this retreat, that St. Hilarius, the illustrious Bishop of Arles, and St. Lupus of Troyes, both the personal friends of St. German, had been prepared for the sanctuary. In the piety and learning of these illustrious men, St. German had the strongest evidence of the superior merits of the system, under which they were brought up. At Lerins, St. Patrick passed the long term of nine years. While residing at Tours, he had received the clerical tonsure, and there also, it is probable, that, before his departure for Lerins, the saint was advanced to the Priesthood. From Lerins, St. Patrick returned to Auxerre.

To one, so anxious as St. Patrick was, to labour in the cause of religion, an opportunity for the exertion of his zeal could not be long wanting. The destitute condition, at this time, of the Christians at Boulogne, engaged in their behalf the charitable concern of St. German. The see of Boulogne had been recently deprived of its chief Pastor, and, unless his place were speedily supplied, there was reason to fear, that the interests of religion there would be greatly injured. So early, indeed, as the reign of Diocletian, the light of the Gospel had dawned on the northern parts of Gaul. But since that period, the negligence of the pastors, or the ravages of the barbarous hordes who infested these territories, had retarded the progress of Christianity there, and marred its salutary influence on the natives who had been converted from

Paganism. To assist in raising religion, in those districts, from its prostrate condition, few could be found better qualified than St. Patrick was. To the advantages derived from the long and severe probation which he underwent at Tours and at Lerins, he joined other qualifications, that fitted him peculiarly for so important an undertaking. He was a native of the country where his missionary career was to commence, and he had thus the most favourable opportunity, for studying the character of the people whom he wished to reform. With the approbation of St. German, he entered therefore on the duties of the sacred ministry, in the diocese of Boulogne. Three or four years were employed by the Saint in his apostolic labours here.* The particular occurrences that distinguished his first mission have not been recorded. But, that it was attended with success, is evidenced by the care, with which tradition has preserved the memory of St. Patrick in those parts where his zeal was then exerted. We know, moreover, that his conduct in Belgic Britain, merited the entire approval of St. German. This St. German evinced, by selecting Patrick to accompany him in the mission, which he undertook to Britain, in order to eradicate the Pelagian heresy from that country

The trust confided on this occasion to German by the Roman Pontiff, was one of the utmost consequence to religion, and required in the person, who ventured to discharge it, more than ordinary prudence and zeal. The poison of Pelagianism had, at this time, endangered the purity of British Christianity; and the distemper it occasioned, was one, which peculiarly needed the aid of an experienced and skilful physician. To distinguish the delicate colours of truth from the shades of error with which

* Lanigan, vol. 1, p. 79.

they were admixed in the Pelagian heresy, the nicest discrimination was often necessary. But there were other qualifications, not less requisite to secure Germanus success in his undertaking. To withdraw men from error, it suffices not simply to expose the weakness of the foundation on which their opinion rests. When unravelling the sophistry of error, the advocate of truth must, moreover, have regard to the moral infirmities of those who dissent from him, and whilst he lays bare imposture, he must cautiously avoid whatever might wound the feelings, or irritate the passions of his opponents. He must exhibit in his own person the virtues that benefit the ministers of truth, and that attest the superior excellence of his doctrine.

Circumstances connected with the heresy which disturbed the peace of Christianity in Britain, at the period here referred to, rendered the qualifications, we have now described, indispensable in the missionary who proposed to serve the cause of religion in that country. The author of the Pelagian heresy was himself a Briton,* and this circumstance alone was calculated to create among his countrymen a partiality for the heterodox opinions which he advanced. The zeal, however, of St. German and his associates, soon triumphed over the many difficulties, which they had to encounter. They met the adherents of Pelagius in a synod which was held at Verulam. The early part of the day, on which the synod assembled, was spent in unavailing disputes, on the questions at issue between the adverse parties. A miracle at length convinced all present, that the doctrine of Germanus was divinely sanctioned. The adherents of Pelagius yielded to the voice of heaven, and professed their belief in the faith

* Dogma quod antiqui satiatum felle draconis
Pestifero vomuit coluber sermone Britannus.
—*Prosper Poem. de Ingratis.*

which Germanus preached. The object of his mission being thus happily accomplished, Germanus with his associates returned home.

The visit of Germanus to Britain gave him an opportunity of learning the condition, in which Christianity was placed in Ireland, and his zeal must have made him solicitous for the diffusion of religion among a people, who, for the most part, were still strangers to the salutary maxims of the Gospel. Even in the absence of this incentive, the circumstances attendant on his mission to Britain, must have often directed his attention to a country where St. Patrick had so long resided, and which, he knew, was to be the grand theatre of that saint's future labours.

That St. German was not inattentive to these considerations, appears from the course which he adopted after his return to Auxerre. On his arrival at Auxerre he immediately directed St. Patrick to proceed to Rome. A priest named Segetius accompanied St. Patrick thither, in obedience to the orders of St. German. Segetius, it has been conjectured, was the person, by whom the Pope had sent his instructions to Germanus, respecting the recent visitation of the British church. But whatever be the credit due to this conjecture, it is certain, that Segetius was commissioned by St. German to introduce St. Patrick to the Roman Pontiff, and to give testimony of the saint's many qualifications for the Irish mission.* St. Celestine, at this period filled St. Peter's chair. Information, which he had received, probably from St. German, of the state of Christianity in Ireland, drew his attention towards that country. But little reflection sufficed to convince the Pontiff, that, to provide for the spiritual welfare of the infant Church in Ireland, the

* Erric, de vita &c. S. Gelm. L. 1, c. 12.

pastoral care of a Bishop was required. Palladius, a Deacon of the Roman Church, was the person to whom St. Celestine confided, in the first instance, the charge of the Irish mission. With the result of Palladius' mission, the reader has been already made acquainted. After the death of Palladius, his associates, a few only excepted, who remained in Ireland, returned to Gaul. Previously to their return, St. Patrick had arrived there also from Rome. Without delay the disciples of *Palladius* repair to Patrick, and inform him, that their master was now no more.

This intelligence made it necessary, that the saint should prepare to receive at once the holy order of episcopacy. Amator, called by some writers Amatorex, a prelate of distinguished sanctity, resided in the vicinity of Eboria, the place where, at this time, St. Patrick happened to be. To this prelate the saint applied for consecration. But before the bishop could comply with his request, the relations of St. Patrick came in numbers to the place where the saint was to be consecrated, and importuned the holy man to abandon an enterprise, which they pronounced to be at once adventurous and extravagant. They pressed on his attention the anguish which he would endure, when separated from his relations, and exiled for ever from the land of his nativity. They offered him many presents, and besought him to remain in the society of his friends, of whose ardent affection for him, these gifts were pledges. Their entreaties they accompanied with tears and lamentations, hoping, by this strong expression of their grief, to effect what they feared their remonstrances could not accomplish. But the saint was not to be diverted from

* Probus, L. 1, c. 25. The second, third, and fourth Lives of St. Patrick. confirm this part of the narrative of Probus.

the course, which, after mature deliberation, he had resolved to pursue. "Guided"—thus the holy man speaks—"by the directing providence of God, I neither consented to their entreaties, nor acquiesced in them. This I did, not by my own strength, but by the grace of God, who enabled me to withstand and overcome every opposition, in order that I might go and preach the Gospel to the Irish people."*

The firmness which the saint showed in resisting the solicitations of his friends, convinced them, that further importunity would be unavailing. As a last subterfuge, recourse was now had to other means, from which a more favourable result was anticipated. The saint had the misfortune to commit, in early youth, a fault of, it seems, rather a grievous nature. This fault was known but to one person, to whom he had himself revealed it. Length of time, and the sincerity of his repentance, St. Patrick hoped, had long since entirely effaced the recollection of his sin. But regardless of the obligation, which charity and friendship alike enjoined, the person to whom the knowledge of the fault was confided, denounced the transgression, as an impediment to the consecration of the saint. The public denunciation of his misfortune at first overwhelmed the holy man with grief and shame. But he appealed in his own vindication to the edifying life, which he had led for the last thirty years, and he persisted in his resolve to receive episcopal consecration.† A vision revealed to him in the night of the same day on which his misfortune was made public, confirmed the saint in his resolution. In this vision he was both assured, that the exposure of his sin was displeasing to the Almighty, and exhorted to persevere in his purpose of preaching the

* Confess. p. 14.
† Confess. p. 10.

Gospel to the Irish people.* Neither was Amator disposed to defer the fulfilment of St. Patrick's wishes. The circumstances which characterised the resistance made to the promotion of the saint, must indeed have convinced Amator, that those who took part in that opposition, were influenced solely by feelings of an earthly and unworthy nature. To a remonstrance suggested by such motives, it was manifest, that the bishop could not attend. Without further delay, therefore, Amator conferred upon him the sacred rite of consecration.

This important ceremony being concluded, Patrick prepared to enter without delay on the duties annexed to his present station. It happened, that a vessel bound to the British shores was just then preparing to set sail. Profiting of this favourable opportunity, the saint embarked in her, and landed safely in Britain.†

From Britain he set sail for Ireland, and after a prosperous voyage reached that long wished for country.

Before I enter on the history of St. Patrick's apostolick labours in Ireland, it will be proper to notice a question, which, in modern times, has caused much angry controversy. Was the mission of St. Patrick, it is asked, sanctioned by the authority of the Roman See? To this question every Catholic writer who has touched upon the subject has given an affirmative reply; and the answer has been approved of by the most distinguished Protestant historians,‡ who have treated on the ecclesiastical annals of Ireland. Still the scepticism of some recent advocates of the Reformation has presumed to dissent from these authorities. These modern opponents of Catholicity object,

* Confess. pp. 10, 11, 12.

† Probus, L. 1, c. 25. Second Life, cap. 26,

‡ Usher, Ware, &c.

that if St. Patrick's mission had been sanctioned by the Roman Pontiff, Platina and St. Prosper, the one a historian, to whom it especially belonged to record the exertions of the Popes in favour of religion, the other the professed panegyrist of St. Celestine, could not have left unnoticed a matter of such grave importance. Neither could an appointment of so great moment, as that of St. Patrick, have been unknown to the other contemporary writers of Rome, of Britain, and of Gaul. And if his appointment had been known to these writers, they would not have passed by in silence a fact so deserving of commemoration. Yet strange to relate, centuries seem to have rolled away before the important commission, with which St. Patrick is said to have been honoured by St. Celestine, was mentioned by any British or foreign writer.

In adjusting this controversy, it will be useful to point out precisely, what is to be established by those, who refer to Rome as the source of St. Patrick's apostleship.

The mission of St. Patrick might have been derived from Rome, and sanctioned by her authority, in either of the following ways. It might have been explicitly and immediately approved of by the Pope, or implicitly and mediately only. In this latter way it would have been sanctioned, if it were undertaken with the approbation of any bishop united in communion with the Roman Pontiff. Indeed, the peculiar condition of society in the early ages of the Church, made it oftentimes impracticable for those, who wished to engage in the conversion of Pagan nations, to obtain for their undertaking any other than the implied sanction of the Apostolic See. Neither, in many cases, was any other sanction then deemed necessary. For, according to the discipline adopted in

those times, a discipline which the former state of society required, it was not necessary to refer to the Supreme Pontiff on every occasion, in which the present usage prescribes a recurrence to his authority. Passing over the ecclesiastical annals of other countries, the early history of the Irish Church records many instances, which illustrate this assertion. After the conversion of the Danes, who had settled at Waterford, that city was erected into an episcopal see, and a bishop elected and consecrated for its government. This important proceeding was adopted and carried into execution, without any explicit or immediate reference to the Holy See, though the persons principally concerned in this transaction were, unquestionably, zealous upholders of the authority of the Pope.* In the same history, we find mention made also of the missions which were undertaken by St. Columban, by St. Aidan, and by many other holy men, without any other explicit sanction, than that of their own immediate superiors in Ireland. And as it cannot be doubted, that the prelates who immediately sanctioned these missions maintained the communion of the Roman Church, the missions which they thus sanctioned must be deemed to have had the implied approbation of the Apostolick See.

In showing that the mission of St. Patrick had, in a similar way at least, the sanction of the Holy See, there can be but little difficulty. The connexion which subsisted between St. German and the Apostle of Ireland, supplies a certain medium, by which such a conclusion may be satisfactorily established. From the narrative which has been given of Germanus' history, it may be seen, that throughout the entire course of his ministry, that illustrious

* This is sufficiently manifest from the circumstance, that the newly-elected Prelate for Waterford, was consecrated by St. Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury.

bishop lived in constant communion with the Roman Pontiffs, and was employed by them on matters of great importance to religion. That such a prelate would have sanctioned St. Patrick's mission to Ireland, were he not fully competent to authorize so momentous an enterprise, or that St. Patrick would have presumed to enter on his mission without the approval of the prelate, by whose counsels he was guided in preparing for the Apostleship of Ireland, are assertions which no impartial person will judge deserving of attention.

Indeed, without resorting to the history of the remote period, when St. Patrick entered on the Irish mission, the present inquiry might be determined, by a reference to the numerous proofs which subsequent ages supply, of the communion, that always existed between the Roman See and the Irish Church. These proofs establish, that, in every age, the people and the clergy of the Irish nation regarded as an hereditary deposit, transmitted from the era when Christianity was introduced into Ireland, the belief, that Rome was the fountain whence their faith was derived. This universal persuasion of the Irish people respecting the origin of their Christianity, a persuasion which they unequivocally expressed on different important occasions, suffices to decide the controversy now under consideration. For, this controversy, it should be remembered, depends on a fact, with which the humblest and the most unlettered of the first converts to Christianity in Ireland must have been very generally acquainted. Upon that fact, the numerous clergy whom St. Patrick appointed throughout the Irish Church must have been fully informed, and from time to time they must have alluded to it, in their public as well as in their private intercourse with their respective congregations. In a word, the fact that St. Patrick's mission was

sanctioned by the Roman Pontiff, was one, with which, if it were true, persons of every condition must have been, in a certain degree, familiar. For, to suppose that St. Patrick could have lived for so long a period, as it is admitted that he did live, in constant intercourse with the Irish clergy and people, without relating to them the principal circumstances that preceded and accompanied his mission to Ireland, would be an unreasonable hypothesis, which would be alike repugnant to the suggestions of nature and of experience. It may be, therefore, lawfully assumed in the present controversy, that the Irish people and clergy, or at least, that many of the one class and of the other who were the contemporaries of St. Patrick, must have been informed upon the leading and more principal circumstances, that were connected with the saint's mission to this country. This point being premised, it is also obvious that it would be not less repugnant to reason to suppose, that the knowledge of the principal circumstances of St. Patrick's mission died along with the persons to whom it was first imparted. With these circumstances, all who conversed with the first converts of St. Patrick must have been acquainted. To every pastor, and to every congregation, to every parent, and to every child, the history of the extraordinary personage, by whose zeal they were brought to the knowledge of salvation, was a theme, on which they must have often dwelt with delight, both in their public assemblies and in their private and familiar intercourse with each other. The knowledge of St. Patrick's history, thus transmitted to their immediate successors by the first Christian congregations in Ireland, multiplied, as it were, in the same proportion, as the population of that country, and the converts to the Gospel there increased in numbers. Thus, from the nature of the fact on which the present controversy depends, from the interest and

importance which must have been attached to that fact by the Irish people, it is evident, that the principal circumstances connected with St. Patrick's mission—the occasion of that mission, and the authority by which St. Patrick was sanctioned in his undertaking—must have been so generally known among the clergy and people of Ireland, that no material error on these points could have prevailed.

To call in question such a fact, as that of which we here speak, merely because it is not mentioned by certain writers who lived at the period to which it is referred, would be unreasonable. For thus, some of the most important events connected with profane and sacred history might be reputed uncertain. Among these events, there are many, which have not, in their transmission to us, been accompanied with any circumstances, similar to those that confirm the evidence in favour of St. Patrick's mission from Rome. For, what circumstances can be more characteristic of truth, than those are, which sustain this evidence? An entire nation gained over to the Gospel, proclaims with one according voice for a series of ages, that its conversion was effected by the zeal of St. Patrick, and that Rome was the origin, whence his apostleship was derived. In Rome, and in the most illustrious churches in communion with Rome, the memory of St. Patrick has been recorded for centuries with veneration, his name has been consecrated in their calendars, and temples have been dedicated under his patronage to the worship of the Almighty. To Rome, as to their parent in religion, the Irish, in every age, have looked for instruction and advice, on whatsoever related to the faith and the morals of their national church. When, for instance, the paschal controversy occasioned dissension among the Irish clergy, it was their unanimous resolve, that in virtue of ancient usage, they should recur to

the source of Catholic unity and draw from thence the salutary waters of instruction. When again, a controversy on the same question obliged the illustrious St. Columban, to appeal in his own vindication to the authority of the Pope,* do we not find, that the saint deemed it a just cause of self-gratulation, that the faith, which Ireland had received through the predecessors of the Pontiff, had been never tainted with the corruption of heresy or of schism? Of what importance is the merely negative objection, derived from the silence of St. Prosper and of Platina,† when we contrast it with the moral evidence which proves, that St. Patrick received his mission from Rome? It may moreover, be here remarked, that the narrative of Platina, is but little more than a transcript of St. Prosper, and that, hence, the silence of the latter writer alone requires any explanation. To a reader acquainted with the character of Prosper's history, the silence of this history on the mission of St. Patrick cannot appear surprising. It was obviously St. Prosper's object, to give a mere outline of the leading events which he refers to, without adverting at all to the subordinate circumstances connected with them. Such being the object which St. Prosper had in view, it sufficed for his purpose, to mention the mission of Palladius by St. Celestine, nor could he have deemed it requisite, to enter into a more minute narrative of this event, than he does of any other occurrence which he relates.

Thus, in like manner, Prosper omits to state the number or the names of those, who were appointed to co-operate with Palladius in the conversion of the Irish people. Why then

* For the letters which St. Columban addressed to the Holy See, on the Paschal Question, Vid. Biblioth. Platrum. Tom. 12.

† You may easily see, what little credit the testimony (or the silence) rather, of so late an author as Platina is, against the constant agreement of all our own writers.—*Usher's Letters, No.* 33.

should this writer have noticed St. Patrick in particular, as, in all appearance, St. Patrick, at the period when the arrangements were first formed for the Irish mission, was assigned only a secondary and subordinate station in that enterprise. It is true, indeed, that the conduct both of the disciples of Palladius after the death of their master, and of St. Patrick also, when he was informed of that event, favours the opinion, that St. Patrick succeeded to the Apostleship of Ireland, in virtue of a previous arrangement, adopted in order to prevent any such calamity, as the death of Palladius, from interfering with the prosecution of the Irish mission. Yet this arrangement conferred on Patrick no present superiority over the other associates of Palladius, and the contingency, on which St. Patrick's promotion depended, was manifestly of such a nature, that the saint might have never succeeded to Palladius. It is not, therefore, surprising, that Prosper should have observed the same silence respecting St. Patrick, which he maintained with regard to the other ecclesiastics, who then engaged in the Irish mission. The silence of St. Prosper, has then no force as an objection, against the arguments which prove, that St. Patrick's mission was sanctioned by the Apostolick See.

Besides the other proofs in favour of the opinion, which ascribes to Rome the mission of St. Patrick, we may refer to the several ancient tracts that were written, before the present controversy began, in order to transmit to posterity the history of the holy man, by whose labours Ireland was converted to the Christian faith. These numerous treatises, though composed at different periods, and by writers of different countries, all agree in assigning to St. Celestine the origination of St. Patrick's mission. This concurring testimony of so many writers, who, as they lived at different periods, and belonged to different countries, must in

many instances at least, have drawn from various sources their information respecting the Apostle of Ireland, claims, in the present controversy, the greatest attention. Especially, when we call to mind, that what these writers affirmed concerning the mission of Patrick was supported by the approval of the ages and nations to which they respectively belonged.

The testimony of Erric, the biographer of St. German, is so explicit on the present question, that it deserves to be particularly noticed. Erric states,* that St. Patrick was sent to Rome by St. German, in company with Segetius a priest, and that after having obtained St. Celestine's approbation, he set out for Ireland. Nennius, a British writer, describes still more minutely the course which St. Patrick adopted, before he entered on the mission of Ireland. This historian informs us, that the saint remained for some time at Rome, that he might prepare for the important enterprise, which he was about to undertake.† Other writers also might be quoted, whose testimony coincides with that of Erric and of Nennius. In a liturgical treatise which Usher ascribes to the early part of the eighth century, it is stated, that St. Patrick was instructed in sacred letters by St. German, and that he was constituted by him also Archbishop of the Scots. The historian of Malmsbury asserts, that, by order of St. Celestine, German sent St. Patrick to preach the Gospel to the Irish people. The several writers, who have been here referred to, are universally admitted to have lived in the communion of the Roman See, and to have entertained the highest reverence for its authority. Would these writers, it may be asked, have been so solicitous to perpetuate the name

* De Vita &c., S. Germ. L. 1, c. 12.

† Nennius adds—A Celestino Papa Romano ad Scotos convertendos in fidem Christi mittitur c. 53, al. 56.

of St. Patrick, and the memory of his virtues, if his mission had not been sanctioned by the authority of St. Peter's successor. Had the British and Continental churches, whose uninterrupted connexion with the Apostolick See the most authentic monuments attest, viewed St. Patrick in the same light, in which some of the modern opponents of Catholicity regard him, would they have enrolled him in their sacred calendars, or have raised temples to the Almighty under the patronage of his name?

Thus, then, in proving that the mission of St. Patrick was sanctioned by the Apostolick See, we may appeal not only to the history of the Church of Ireland, but, even to the ecclesiastical annals of other countries. With the evidence, which these annals supply, that of the biographers of St. Patrick is found entirely to concur. The testimony of St. Patrick's biographers rests, we must believe, on the authority not of any recent or solitary documents, but of ancient numerous authentic monuments, which were extant, at the period when these historians lived. For, it would be unreasonable to suppose, that writers, who belonged to different countries and to different centuries, and who lived before the art of printing had rendered it easy to multiply the copies of any particular work, should have borrowed their respective statements from one and the same source. The accuracy or veracity of St. Patrick's biographers, with regard to the particular point under examination, none of their contemporaries ever ventured to impugn. On the contrary, the statement of these writers, so far as relates to the present controversy, was in perfect accordance with the constant and universal persuasion of the nation, which St. Patrick had converted to the Gospel, and the pastors and the people of that nation, have ever venerated Rome, as the parent of their own and of every other Apostolick Church.

Indeed, without entering into any examination of the particular writers, who can be adduced to prove, that St. Patrick derived his mission from Rome, the question here at issue may be decided, by referring to the history of the invasion of Ireland by Henry the Second. With the means, to which that Monarch resorted, in order that he might obtain the sanction of the Pope, for his enterprise against Ireland, all are acquainted. Every person also knows, how artfully Henry laboured, when he came to Ireland, to employ the name and authority of the Pontiff, to reconcile the clergy and the people to his usurpation. To effect this great object, he was careful, that the Bull which he had received from Pope Adrian should be solemnly promulged, that the payment of tithes should be decreed by a canon, which was sanctioned by his authority, and finally that a Synod should be convened in Dublin for the reformation of the abuses, that were alleged by him and his partizans to be then prevalent in Ireland. These proceedings of Henry obviously prove, that, at the period of the invasion, the authority of the Pope must have been held in the greatest veneration by the Irish people. For, if it were not thus reverenced by them, the course pursued by Henry, instead of serving his interests, would, on the contrary, have greatly prejudiced the cause, in which he was embarked. To make the conduct of the King appear consistent with the dictates of rational policy, we must suppose, that, before the English invasion, the clergy and the people of Ireland cherished sentiments of such profound respect for the authority of the Pontiff, as to inspire Henry with the hope, that by obtaining the Pope's interposition in his favour, he would greatly facilitate the accomplishment of his designs. It may be moreover remarked, that if the belief of the Irish people on the authority of the Pope could have been shaken, the

interposition of the Pontiff in favour of Henry would certainly have induced those, who were adverse to the English cause, to inveigh against the interference of a foreign Prelate either in the spiritual or temporal concerns of the people of Ireland. And yet, notwithstanding the strong indignation, which the entire nation both clergy and people felt at the conduct of the Pontiff, no expression was uttered by them, which was injurious to the spiritual prerogatives of the Chief Pastor of the Christian Church. The doctrines of the supremacy of the Roman Pontiff having been thus universally received in Ireland in the twelfth century, it is manifest, that the same doctrine must have also prevailed throughout the Irish Church, in the preceding century. For, if it had not, then those who lived in the twelfth century—for many of them had conversed with persons belonging to the eleventh century—would have reclaimed against the authority of the Pope, as an innovation unknown to their own immediate predecessors. In like manner, it is impossible, that this doctrine could have prevailed throughout Ireland in the eleventh century, in the way in which we have proved that it did prevail, unless those who belonged to that century had learned it from their predecessors in the tenth century. By pursuing this easy and familiar course of argumentation, we may thus go back to the century, when Christianity was introduced into Ireland by St. Patrick, and show that it was then alone, that the doctrine which the Irish Church professed in the twelfth century respecting the Roman Pontiff, was first received. And, as this doctrine was received from St. Patrick and his fellow labourers in the Gospel, the mission of these holy men must have been sanctioned by that authority, for which they taught their converts to entertain such profound reverence.

CHAPTER III.

St. Patrick arrives in Ireland—preaches the Gospel in every part of the kingdom—and succeeds in establishing Christianity throughout the Island.

THE vessel which conveyed St. Patrick to Ireland, directed her course to the eastern shores of the Island, and entered one of the principal harbours belonging to the territory of Leinster. The name of the harbour cannot be now certainly determined; but if we follow the narrative of Probus, one of the most esteemed historians of St. Patrick, Dublin would seem to be the place which the Apostle of Ireland first honoured with his presence.* As soon as he had landed, he prepared to announce the important object for which he came. His first missionary essay is said to have been unsuccessful. For the present, therefore, the saint resolved to retire from Leinster, and preach the Gospel in the other parts of the Island. The long servitude which he had endured in the northern division of the kingdom, made him better acquainted with that than with any other part of the country. He hence indulged the hope, that his missionary labours there

* Probus calls the port where St. Patrick landed—Portum regionis Evolenorum utique, apud nos clarissimum. This description, so applicable to the harbour of Dublin, is quite inapplicable to Wicklow, the place where Colgan, Harris &c. say that the saint disembarked. The names "Evolenorum," "Ebolenorum," "Eblanorum," appear to be synonymous. Dublin is called by Ptolemy "Portus Eblanorum."

would not be without advantage. Indeed, it is but reasonable to suppose, that the edifying life of the saint, during his captivity in that district, had disposed many of the inhabitants there, to receive favourably the announcement of the Gospel. They had seen Patrick, while he was yet a youth, practising the most exalted virtues. For six full years they had beheld him, while he was detained in unjust captivity, serving his master with unremitting fidelity, and enduring with cheerfulness, privations for which his youth and his condition of life wholly unfitted him. To these virtues, which must have been viewed with admiration even by a Pagan people, they saw him unite the most exemplary attention to all the duties of religion. In their intercourse with him, they must have often heard him speak on the worship of the true God, and on the solemn truths which the Gospel unfolds upon the creation and the end of man. These were dogmas with which Patrick was familiar, and his piety was too warm not to have frequently dwelt on them, especially while he lived with persons, who were unhappily ignorant of their importance. Of those with whom the saint formerly conversed in Ireland, many were still alive, and to such, his return among them, that he might labour for their salvation, must have occasioned surprise and admiration.

But the place where the saint had disembarked was removed a great distance from his former abode, and to undertake so long a journey by land, would be attended with many inconveniences. It happened, opportunely, that the ship in which St. Patrick came to Ireland, lay still in the same harbour where she had first entered. Profiting of this favourable circumstance, the saint embarked in her a second time, and sailed towards the northern coast of the Island. The vessel reached her destination in

safety, and entered a creek which adjoins to the port of Strangford or Dundrum. Here Patrick and his companions landed. Eager to commence the sacred duty which they had undertaken, they proceeded, without delay, into the interior of the country, that they might converse with the inhabitants, and announce the object of their mission. Before they had advanced far, they were met by a herd belonging to the chieftain of the territory, through which they were journeying. Alarmed at the sight of so many strangers, the herd hastened to apprize his master of their arrival. Dicho —thus the chieftain was named—suspecting that they were a party of marauders in quest of plunder, issued forth with an armed force, in order to oppose them. The appearance of the missionaries, soon, however, convinced Dicho, that his suspicions were unfounded. The attention of the chieftain is said to have been fixed particularly on Patrick. The meek and prepossessing demeanour of the saint made an immediate and deep impression upon the mind of the Pagan. Forgetting the hostile intentions with which he had come forth to meet the missionaries, Dicho addressed them in terms of kindness and good will, and pressed them to partake of the hospitality of his abode. The missionaries yielded a willing compliance to his request, and accompanied him to his dwelling. A favourable opportunity now offered, for announcing to the chieftain the motive, which induced them to abandon their native home, and expose themselves to danger and to suffering in a foreign land. St. Patrick was not slow in availing himself of so propitious a conjuncture. He proclaimed to Dicho the saving truths of redemption, and exhorted him to profit of the grace, which was offered for his acceptance. The chieftain listened with respect to the saint's instruction. As soon as the discourse had terminated, Dicho declared himself ready to embrace the

proffered benediction, and professing his faith in Christ, he was initiated in the sacred rite of regeneration. His family, following his example, were first instructed in the Christian doctrine, and afterwards admitted to baptism.

Such were the first fruits of St. Patrick's apostolick labours in Ireland. Small indeed, in the beginning, like the mustard seed, but, like the same seed, wanting only a short time, to increase with a surprising and admirable fecundity. Grateful for the spiritual favours, which he had received through the ministry of Patrick, Dicho desired to set apart a place, in his own immediate vicinity, for the celebration of divine worship. Convenient to his residence and on his own territory, there stood a house, which was sufficiently spacious for the accommodation of the Christian converts. This house with a small portion of the adjoining ground, the chieftain offered to St. Patrick. In the discharge of his sacred ministry, Patrick had resolved to emulate the disinterested zeal of the illustrious Apostle of the Gentiles. He knew indeed, with St. Paul, that it was lawful for him who served the altar to live by the altar; but he felt with the same Apostle, that though to act in this way was not forbidden, yet it was a mode of proceeding, which was not always expedient. In his present enterprise, it was, the saint felt persuaded, a matter of the utmost consequence that his ministry should be placed beyond the reach of suspicion, that no obstacle might be opposed by him to the progress of the Gospel. "Tell me"—exclaims the holy man in his Confessions—"if I have received any remuneration, however trifling, from the thousands whom I baptized, and I will return it again."*

* Confess. p. 19.

With the rule, however, that the saint observed respecting the temporal remuneration which was occasionally offered to him, the donation of Dicho in no way interfered. The gift, in this instance, was not a personal favour; it was a tribute of gratitude to the Almighty, that evinced both the sincerity of Dicho's conversion, and his solicitude that the Christian worship should be duly celebrated in his territory. St. Patrick, therefore, joyfully received from the hands of his convert this offering of piety, and a temple to the true God was thus happily established. To the place, where this first trophy of his zeal was erected, the saint oftentimes withdrew during the subsequent part of his apostolick career, that he might there indulge his love of retirement and of prayer. A church and a monastery, which were afterwards erected on the same spot, perpetuated the memory of Dicho's liberality, and of the favourite retreat of his spiritual parent.

The conversion of Dicho and of his family, having been now finally accomplished, Patrick next prepared to announce to his former master the truths of salvation. With this intention the saint commenced his journey towards the residence of Milcho.* Milcho was obstinately attached to the superstition of his fathers. Influenced by this unhappy feeling, and ashamed, perhaps, to listen to the instructions of a person who had been formerly his bondsman, Milcho, as soon as he was informed of the saint's approach, resolved to defeat the zeal of the missionary, by refusing to hold any intercourse with him. The solicitude of the holy man for the welfare of his former master being thus rendered ineffectual, Patrick was forced to abandon him to his

* Probus, L. 1, c. 29. Second Life, c. 29, 30.

obstinacy. From the place where Milcho resided, the saint returned once more to the habitation of Dicho, and began to preach the Gospel through every part of the adjoining district.

Here his labours were blessed with the most cheering success. The inhabitants listened with attention and respect to the solemn truths which he promulged, and many of them professed their willingness to regulate their lives by the maxims of the Gospel.

The season set apart for the Paschal solemnity was now approaching, and the saint resolved to celebrate this festival in the vicinity of Tarah. Tarah, formerly a city in the territory of Meath, was, at this time, the place where the supreme Monarch of Ireland resided. The presence of the sovereign attracted thither the most distinguished personages from every quarter of the country. By a fundamental law of the kingdom it was ordained, that the great council of the nation should be assembled at Tarah every third year. To this council it belonged, to provide by its enactments for the general welfare of the state. In its proceedings, the nobles and the chieftains of each province, and also the principal ministers of the national worship, took a part. The importance of announcing the doctrine of redemption before so illustrious an assembly, was seen and appreciated by the Saint. At Tarah, the national superstition might be assailed in its strong hold, and if successfully encountered there, the triumph of truth would be illustrious, and the progress of Christianity throughout the Island, it might be confidently hoped, would be both rapid and successful. The wisdom of the saint's resolution to announce the Gospel in the chief seat of the national worship, was sanctioned by the example of the Apostles themselves. These holy men, when sent by the Saviour

to proclaim the accomplishment of redemption, fearlessly issued forth from retirement, and preached Jesus Christ crucified, in Jerusalem, in Athens, and in Rome. Had they adopted a different course, and taught the Christian doctrine in obscure and unnoted places, they would have exposed their cause to the suspicion that it could not bear the test of publick investigation. But by boldly advancing to the chief seats of the Jewish and Pagan worship, they showed that they courted inquiry, as the means, by which their cause was to triumph. Thus they arrested the attention of all, who deemed the knowledge of the true religion a matter of importance, and by their success supplied an argument, which will prove to the latest posterity the divine origin of their mission.

Emulating these first heralds of the Gospel, and anticipating similar happy results from the course which he proposed to follow, the saint bid an affectionate farewell to Dicho, and in company with his missionary associates, commenced his journey to Tarah. Having reached the sea shore, it was removed but a short distance from Dicho's house, they embarked on board the vessel, that had conveyed them to the place, from which they were now departing. The vessel having taken a southern course, coasted along the Irish shore, until they arrived at the mouth of the Boyne. Here they disembarked and proceeded on foot to the royal residence. An auspicious event, which occurred while they were travelling thither, encouraged them to hope for success in their present enterprise.

It chanced, that, on their way, they stopped for a night at the house of a person, who received the missionaries with every demonstration of courtesy and good will. Seschnen, this was the name of the host, is said to be a person of some consideration and affluence. His courteous demeanour

afforded the missionaries a pleasing opportunity of informing Seschnen of the object, which they had in view. Seschnen listened with attention to their instructions and embraced* the Gospel. His family, encouraged by his edifying example, were also instructed in the truths of salvation, and professed themselves Christians. Consoled by the blessing which attended their exertions, Patrick and his associates, on the following day, resumed their journey, and arrived about evening at the place where the village of Slane now stands. The day of his arrival at Slane was the vigil of the Paschal solemnity. As the night now approached, Patrick and his companions erected a tent for their accommodation. The next care of the missionaries was to prepare for celebrating Easter with becoming devotion.

From the earliest period of Christianity, the faithful were accustomed to watch in the church, during the night which precedes the feast of the Resurrection. To dispel the darkness of the night, and to provide for the celebration of the publick worship, numerous tapers blazed throughout the sacred edifice. It was not, however, merely to dissipate the darkness of the night, or to secure the decent performance of the offices of religion, that these lights were enkindled. The piety of the first Christians made this ceremony subserve other important purposes also. According to the sublime narrative of the Evangelist, Jesus Christ was the true light, which enlighteneth every man, who cometh into this world. The returning splendour of this eternal light from the obscurity of the tomb, the faithful were taught to commemorate, by the refulgence which illumined their churches on the eve of the Saviour's resurrection. Neither did they confine to the Easter vigil the use of a rite so

* Third Life, cap. 36. Jocelin, cap. 39.

well adapted to typify the mysterious truths of the Gospel. In his reply to Vigilantius, St. Jerome informs us, that, "Throughout all the churches of the East, and amid the splendour of the meridian sun, lights were enkindled, when the Gospel was about to be read, in order to point out that light of which it is said, 'Thy word, O Lord, is a light to my feet.'"

In compliance with a usage, which venerable antiquity had so solemnly sanctioned, St. Patrick ordered the Paschal fire to be enkindled.* It happened, that the princes and chieftains of the kingdom were then assembled in the palace at Tarah. They had come together, on this occasion, for the purpose of celebrating some festival prescribed by the national superstition. Whilst this festival was being solemnized, the laws ordained, that no fire should be lighted in the vicinity of the royal residence, until one had been first enkindled in the palace of the sovereign. To this law the most solemn sanction was annexed, and the death alone of the delinquent could expiate the guilt of its violation.†

The sceptre of Ireland was swayed at this period by a prince called Leogaire. From the neighbouring summit of the hill, on which his palace stood, Leogaire saw with astonishment the gleam of the Paschal fire, which the missionaries had enkindled. Who, the monarch anxiously demanded, were they, that thus presumed, even in his own presence, to set at nought the law, which regulated one of the most sacred observances of the national worship? The Magi—they were the ministers of the national worship—beheld with still greater alarm this extraordinary occurrence, and admonished the sovereign of the danger which impended, if the fire should not be immediately extinguished. "Thus,

* Jocelin, cap. 40.

† Second Life, cap. 34.

only," they exclaimed, "could the holy fires of their altars be kept alive, and Leogaire and his people rescued from destruction.* Terrified at so portentous an announcement, the King, in company with two of the Magi, and attended by a numerous retinue, set out for Slane, resolved to punish the presumption which exposed himself and his subjects to such disastrous calamities. Having arrived near the place where St. Patrick had raised a temporary habitation, Leogaire ordered the saint to be brought before him. Without delay the holy man obeyed the royal mandate. Before the saint had arrived at the place, where Leogaire and his attendants remained, it was arranged by the prince, and by those who accompanied him, that no mark of kindness or attention should be shown to St. Patrick at his approach. Herc, the son of Dego, had the courage to disregard this discourteous ordinance. As soon as the saint advanced into the royal presence, Herc rose and accosted him with a kindly salutation.† The holy man, in return, imparted his benediction‡ to the generous youth who thus courteously greeted his approach. The benediction of the saint was not bestowed in vain. To it, the Divine Providence was pleased to annex the grace of Herc's immediate conversion to the faith.

What effect this extraordinary occurrence had on the mind of Leogaire, our historians do not inform us. It may, indeed, be supposed, that the timidity of superstition made the monarch apprehend, that the saint accomplished Herc's apostacy from the worship of his fathers, by the potency of some strange and preternatural influence. The tendency to ascribe unlooked-for events to the potency of magic, and

* Probus, L. 1, c. 35.
† Usher's Tripartite Pr. p. 489.
‡ Usher, Ibid.

the dread of being brought within the sphere of preternatural agency, were characteristics, that belonged to the adherents of Paganism in every country. Thus, to recite one instance, from the history of the neighbouring country of Britain. When the missionaries sent thither by St. Gregory, requested leave from Ethelbert, King of Kent, to explain the Gospel in his presence, the monarch assented, indeed, to their prayer, but annexed this condition to his assent, that they should hold the proposed conference under the open air. This precaution Ethelbert adopted, to guard against the secret influence of magic, to which he feared the missionaries might successfully resort, if they were received within the walls of his palace.

But whatever influence the occurrence of which we have been speaking, may have had on the mind of Leogaire, it must have pleaded in behalf of the missionaries, that they were strangers in the country, and were, it ought to be therefore presumed, unacquainted with the law which they had violated. At all events, neither the Prince nor the Magi, appear to have desired, that the conduct of the missionaries should be punished by the severe penalty, which the national code enjoined. On the contrary, the fears, which Leogaire at first entertained, seem, after his interview with Saint Patrick, to have been allayed, and his benevolence towards the strangers to have been in some measure conciliated. Of this, the occurrences which took place immediately after are a sufficient proof. On the day following that, on which St. Patrick had explained to Leogaire the nature and the object of his undertaking, the holy man proceeded to Tarah, where the national assembly was then convened. The day which the Saint chose, to appear before the distinguished persons who composed this council, was sacred to the memory of the Saviour's re-

surrection. The choice was an auspicious one, and the many sublime associations, which the Easter festival naturally brought before the mind of the missionary, must have animated his zeal, and have encouraged him to engage with confidence in his sacred enterprise. Having entered the hall where the council was assembled, the Apostle of Ireland, emulating the example of the illustrious Doctor of the Gentiles at Athens, boldly announced the saving truths of redemption. An incident similar to that, which attended the first interview of the Saint with Leogaire, is said to have illustrated his mission on this occasion also.

Among the distinguished persons, who were admitted to a seat in the supreme assembly of the nation, the bards of Ireland were particularly reverenced. To the Irish bards, the duty of recording in harmonious numbers the achievements of their countrymen was especially confided. The wisdom of the senator, the bravery of the chieftain, and the illustrious exploits of the first founders of the Irish nation, it was their province to celebrate in appropriate strains. Thus, it was hoped, the rising youth of Ireland would be excited to emulation, and the fame of those, who advanced the national glory in the field or in the cabinet, would be embalmed in the recollection of posterity. To this honourable office, other duties of not less importance to the publick weal were also annexed. The care of preserving an exact registry of the genealogies and prerogatives of the nobility, and of the boundaries which distinguished the possessions of the several chieftains, was especially confided, to the members of the Bardic institution. That these important functionaries should impartially discharge the duties entrusted to them, was obviously of the utmost consequence to the general welfare. It was therefore wisely ordained, that, at stated intervals, their writings should be submitted

to a tribunal, in which the sovereign himself, and a certain number of the nobility presided. Before this tribunal, the works of these writers were diligently examined, and from the entire collection, an extract was madè, which, when authenticated by the appointed judges, was deposited in the royal archives of Tarah.* Such was the nature of the Bardic institution, at the period when Christianity was first introduced into Ireland. With the superstition, which previously prevailed throughout the kingdom, this institution seems to have been but accidentally connected. Hence, its permanency was not disturbed, when the Pagan worship was abolished throughout the Island. On the contrary, the Bardic order was encouraged and patronised by some of the most distinguished pastors of the ancient church of Ireland. In St. Columba, the illustrious Abbot of Hy, the Bards had a powerful and successful advocate, at a period when, if he had not interfered in their behalf, their order would have been entirely abolished. At the close of the sixth century, they had incurred the displeasure of Aidus the chief monarch of Ireland, and of several leading members of the national assembly. By the sovereign, and the nobles who coincided in opinion with him, it was proposed, that to remedy the evils attributed to them, the Bardic order should be suppressed, and the members of it sent into banishment. The Bards, Aidus and the advocates of his opinion affirmed, were a proud and venal order

* *His itaque .... demandatum fuit negotium, ut omnia notabilia, vel commemoratu digna in Regno aut viciniis contingentia, secundum quod veritas facti se haberet, annotarent, et ne menda, obreperet, aut falsa insinuatio, tenebantur in Comitiis generalibus, vel coram Supremo Monarcha, et selectis peritioribus Proceribus (quibus post Lucis Evangelicæ agnitionem adjuncti fuerent Episcopi) scripta sua producere quolibet triennio, ubi habita diligenti discussione, ac expunctis omnibus quæ incertiæ aut dubiæ fidei viderentur, de congestis omnium calculo approbatis summarium extractum asservabatur in Regio Scrinio Temoriæ.—M'Mahon, Jus. Primatiale Armach.* p. 181, n. 327.

of men, who bestowed praise or censure, not as the one or the other was merited, but according as interest or passion prompted them. It happened, fortunately for the Bardic institution, that affairs of great importance had brought St. Columba from his monastery at Hy, to the meeting of the states, which was then convened at Drumceat. The Abbot generously interposed in favour of the accused, and pleaded so successfully for them, that the assembly was content to prescribe some rules, for the future regulation of their order.

Whatever the other faults of the Bardic order might have been, indifference to the glory and independence of Ireland cannot be imputed to its members. At the period of the English invasion, and indeed for a long time after, the Bards animated their countrymen, by their bold and inspiriting anthems, to encounter the Saxon enemy nobly in the field, and shake off the domination, to which the foreign oppressor would subject their native land. "Hapless land!"—thus the Bard of the O'Neill's mourned over his country—"thou art a bark, through which the sea hath burst its way—we hardly discover any part of you, in the hands of the plunderer. Yes, he hath refitted you for his own habitation, and we are new-moulded for his purposes. Ye Israelites of Egypt—ye wretched inhabitants of this foreign land—is there no relief for you? Is there no Hector left for the defence, or rather for the recovery of Troy?"

In language not less affecting, other Bards also lamented the fallen fortunes of Ireland. The people, roused into exertion by the bold anthems of their poets, achieved many a daring deed to restore their country to independence. The influence of the Bards in fomenting resistance, was soon perceived by the invaders, and no means were left untried to extinguish a race so devoted to freedom. By

degrees, the Bards, and the language in which their anthems were composed, decayed before the withering enactments of the conquerors; and, at length, the English power was everywhere acknowledged throughout the Island.

At the period, when St. Patrick entered the hall of Tarah, it happened, that Dubtach, a distinguished member of the Bardic order was present. The generous example of Herc was not lost upon Dubtach; and, though the other members of the assembly remained sitting, when St. Patrick appeared among them, the Bard immediately arose, and with becoming courteousness saluted the stranger. On one, who so cheerfully evinced his respect for the missionary, the solemn truths which the Apostle of Ireland then proclaimed, must have produced a deep impression. Nor did much time elapse, until Dubtach confessed the salutary change, which the persuasive eloquence of the Saint had wrought upon him. For, before Patrick departed from the assembly, his zeal was rewarded by the public profession, which Dubtach made of his belief in the Gospel. But, Dubtach had learned from the instructions of the missionary, that besides the profession of the true faith, there were certain moral obligations prescribed by the Christain law, on the fulfilment of which, eternal happiness depended. Among these obligations, there was one of paramount importance, which ordered a Christian to employ his talents in such a way, as might conduce to the great end for which they had been conferred upon him. To abuse these sacred gifts of the Most High, by devoting them to honour principles or actions inconsistent with religion, reason itself declares to be a grievous profanation. To such a profanation, the dignity which Dubtach enjoyed, must have oftentimes exposed him. He was the "Arch Poet" of the King, and of the nation, and in this capacity he had, doubtless, while addicted to a

false worship, not unfrequently employed his talents on themes, connected with the errors and the vices of his Pagan countrymen. This abuse, the piety of the convert was now anxious to repair. Without delay, he bid farewell to the pleasure and the fame which he had heretofore derived from his profane compositions, and devoted himself ever afterwards to the celebration of such subjects as might recommend the Gospel to his countrymen.

Besides the conversion of the distinguished person of whom mention has been just now made, the appearance of St. Patrick before the supreme council of Tarah was attended with another important consequence. It afforded the Saint an opportunity of giving a correct exposition of the tenets which the Gospel teaches. Had he not availed himself of this opportunity, the adherents of the national worship would have been enabled to misrepresent his doctrine, and thus to excite the prejudices of the people against Christianity. But, by the bold and ingenious course which the Saint adopted, the abettors of the received superstition were deprived of such a resource. On Leogaire, as well as on many of the other members of the assembly, St. Patrick appears to have made an impression, somewhat favourable to the cause which the missionary advocated. Of this, the conduct of the King furnishes sufficient evidence. Before the Saint retired from the hall, he succeeded in obtaining the sanction of the Monarch, to announce the Gospel in every part of the Kingdom. One condition only Leogaire annexed to the indulgence. The condition was an easy one. It enjoined the missionaries, that in preaching the Gospel, they should be careful not to interrupt the publick tranquillity. The Royal protection having been thus happily obtained, St. Patrick prepared to extend his mission to those parts of the Island, which he had not as yet visited.

Tailten, situated in the territory of Meath, is mentioned as the place, to which the Saint repaired, after he had departed from Tarah. Here, at stated seasons, according to a usage which then prevailed, solemn games were celebrated. Thither, at the close of their deliberations, the princes and the other members of the national assembly at Tarah were accustomed to resort, in order to assist at the performance of these festivities. The same motives, which induced the Saint to open his mission at Tarah, pointed out Tailten, as the next place, in which he should preach the Gospel. Here he would have an opportunity of confirming the favourable impression, which he had made on the minds of many of his auditors at Tarah; and could his zeal accomplish their conversion, their example, it was apparent, would powerfully recommend the Christian religion to the entire nation. It happened, that one of the brothers of Leogaire had then fixed his residence at Tailten. The conduct of Leogaire was calculated to inspire St. Patrick with the hope, that the Gospel might be announced with advantage in the presence of that monarch's brother. The Saint accordingly commenced his labours at Tailten, by preaching before him. Carbre—thus the brother of Leogaire was named—heard the missionary with impatience. His aversion to the Christian doctrine soon became apparent, and the violence of his conduct convinced the saint, that any exertion to conciliate the favour of the prince would be unavailing. The grief of the holy man for the incredulity of Carbre was, however, consoled, by the pious docility, with which Conall, a third brother of Leogaire, listened to the saving doctrine of the Gospel. The respectful attention with which Conall heard the truths of Christianity, was followed by his conversion, and the prince received from St. Patrick the sacred rite of regeneration.

As soon as the Easter week had elapsed, St. Patrick departed from Tailten. From the course which the saint now followed, it appears, that he deemed it of great importance, to establish Christianity throughout the entire vicinage of Tarah, before he should proceed to the more remote parts of the kingdom. Hence, after he had visited Tarah, he employed a considerable time in preaching the Gospel in the territories of Meath and Westmeath. From Meath, St. Patrick passed into the neighbouring districts of Longford and Leitrim. His mission in Leitrim is stated to have been distinguished by an extraordinary occurrence. In a part of that territory, in a plain, which was in the neighbourhood of Feanagh, the idol Crom-Cruach was worshipped by the inhabitants. To withdraw these unhappy people from so degrading a superstition the Apostle of Ireland resolved to visit himself the place where the idol was adored. As soon as he had arrived at the scene of this impious profanation, the Saint poured forth his soul in prayer, in favour of a misguided people, who gave to the work of their own hands the worship due to God alone. The prayer of the holy man ascended into heaven, and moved the Creator to mercy. In the presence of its own worshippers, the idol crumbled into dust, and the power of the true God was made manifest in its destruction. A church erected on the spot which was before profaned by the impure rites of idolatry, transmitted to succeeding ages the memory of the wonderful things that God had accomplished there by the ministry of the servant.

Having now employed almost three years in preaching the Gospel in the vicinity of Tarah, St. Patrick next proceeded to open his mission in Connaught. In his journey to the interior of that province, it happened, that, on a certain day, the Saint and his companions sat down, at an early hour of the morning, near a fountain, that they might

chaunt together the praises of the Most High. In a place, not far removed from the fountain, two of the daughters of Leogaire had, at that time, taken up their abode. While the missionaries, attired in white robes, and holding books in their hands, were engaged in chaunting the anthems of the divine praise, the two princesses approached, intending to bathe in the fountain. Astonished at the unexpected and strange appearance of the missionaries, they anxiously inquired, who these persons were, and to what order of beings they belonged. To their several inquiries St. Patrick returned a courteous reply, and while he satisfied their curiosity, he was careful to instruct them in the knowledge of the true God. Him, the Saint announced, as alone worthy of adoration, as the Creator and the Lord of all things. Anxious to obtain every information concerning the Mighty Being of whom St. Patrick spoke, they desired to know, where the place of his habitation was. Was his dwelling in the heavens, or upon the earth? In the mountains, or the valleys? In the rivers, or in the depths of the sea? Did this Great Being yet enjoy the vigour of youth, or were his hairs now silvered with the hoar of venerable old age? His riches, were they great, in proportion to the grandeur of his name? His sons and daughters, if sons and daughters he had any, were they distinguished for the beauty and the comeliness of their persons? In a word, how, they wished him to say, was the Being, whom he announced, to be worthily reverenced? In reply to these inquiries, the holy man unfolded the sublime truths which Christianity teaches respecting the Godhead, and the mystery of man's redemption. Charmed with his discourse on these most interesting and important subjects, the princesses then besought the Saint, to teach them what they were to do, that they might be acceptable in the sight of

that God, whose name he preached unto them. Let them only know, they repeated, what was required for this purpose, and they would cheerfully comply with any injunction, which might be imposed upon them. The saint accordingly instructed them in the leading truths of Christianity. His discourse being concluded, the princesses professed their belief in the Gospel, and were admitted, after they had received the sacred rite of regeneration, to participate of the holy Eucharist.

Cheered by the auspicious event, which attended the opening of his mission in Connaught, St. Patrick resumed his journey, and visited several parts of that province. In every place, through which he passed, his preaching was blessed with success, and many of the natives were gained over to the worship of the true God. In one district, that known by the name of Tyrawley, the Saint had the happiness to convert to the Christian faith, the prince who ruled over that territory, the brothers of the prince—they were six in number—and along with these, twelve thousand of the inhabitants.

The success of the holy missionary, had begun, by this time, to alarm the Magi, for the safety of the worship entrusted to their guardianship. To oppose by argument the sacred dispensation, which St. Patrick proclaimed, could only add to the mortification which they had endured from his success, and give a new occasion of triumph to the cause which he defended. To resort to any other than human agency, in order to check his progress, would be not less unavailing; for, the efficacy of his prayers had crumbled into dust the idol which was the most venerated throughout the country. The death of the apostlolick man was then the only remedy, by which they could prevent the people from being withdrawn from the worship, which, for so long a time, had

been reverenced throughout the Island. A conspiracy was, therefore, formed against the Saint, and in consequence, an attempt to deprive him of life soon followed. Fortunately for the cause of religion in Ireland, Enda, one of the Princes who had been recently converted to the Christian faith, was apprized of the plot, that had been concerted against the Saint. Alarmed for the safety of the holy man, the royal convert at once interposed, and by his exertions defeated the malice of the conspirators. Nor did Heaven allow the crime, which these unhappy men meditated against its minister, to pass unpunished. Recraid, the principal conspirator, soon felt its vengeance in his sudden death, and the fate of their Chief warned the other accomplices, of the danger of molesting a man who was so visibly protected by the Almighty.

The vision with which the Saint was favoured, before he engaged in the Irish mission, has been already related. In that vision, there seemed to be presented to him a letter from the inhabitants of Foclut, in which they besought the Saint, to come and dwell among them. The wood of Foclut appears to have been situated in the same vicinity in which the Saint had succeeded in converting the seven princes of whom mention has been just now made, together with many thousands of their people. In the extraordinary success with which the zeal of St. Patrick was blessed on this occasion, the Saint had therefore great reason to rejoice. The connexion between the conversion of these people and the vision with which he was favoured in Gaul, was too obvious not to have been perceived by him, and while the promptitude with which he listened to their invitation, must have been to him the cause of unfeigned delight, their faithful correspondence with his exertions in their behalf, consoled

him amidst the privations which he endured for their welfare.

Seven years had now nearly elapsed, since St. Patrick had commenced his Apostolick labours in Connaught. During that period, he had made the name of Christ known in its remotest districts, and had even visited some parts of that province a second time. But he would have conferred only a transitory benefit on its inhabitants, if he had merely announced the Gospel to them, and had not also consulted for the preservation of religion among those, whom he had there converted. Against so serious an omission, the Apostle of Ireland was careful to provide a suitable remedy. As he progressed through the country, he cautiously selected, from the number of his Neophytes, those, whose piety and intelligence seemed to fit them best for the functions of the sacred ministry. The persons whom he thus chose, the Saint himself, in many instances, instructed in the knowledge necessary for the priesthood. The same important duty is stated to have been discharged by the other missionaries who accompanied St. Patrick, and even by some of their first converts to the Gospel, as soon as these were themselves sufficiently prepared for so arduous an undertaking. Thus, in a short time, the Saint was enabled to confide to pastors of approved piety, the several Christian congregations which his zeal had established.* The welfare of religion in every part of Connaught being now provided

* As St. Patrick progressed through Connaught, he appointed the following pastors over churches which he established in that province. Asicus at Elphin, Bromus at West Cashel, (Sligo,) Cethenus at Tirelli; near Oran in Roscommon, he assigned a place of abode for some of his Gallic disciples who wished to live in retirement. At Costello, (Mayo,) he left a Priest by name Loarn; at Canagh, another called Conan, and over the Church of Aghagower he appointed Senach, a priest eminent for his humility and piety.

for, St. Patrick, journeying through the maritime districts in the northern division of that province, returned to Ulster. The Gospel had been, indeed, already preached in certain portions of Ulster. But, in the greater part of that extensive province, the people continued still estranged from the knowledge of the true God. Anxious to deliver them from the unhappy bondage, to which superstition enslaved them, St. Patrick travelled successively through each district of Ulster, proclaiming where ever he came the great mystery of man's redemption. In each of the principal divisions of the province, in Donegal, in Derry, in Tryone, and in Monaghan, his zeal was rewarded with an abundant benediction. From Monaghan, the Saint directed his course towards the northern parts of Meath. Here he spent some time, in instructing the inhabitants in the doctrine of the Gospel. As soon as this duty was accomplished, St. Patrick revisited the Churches which had been founded by him at the commencement of his mission. This visit gave him an opportunity of perfecting the good work which he had here begun, but which the many difficulties that attended the opening of his career, had not hitherto allowed him to complete.

His zeal next directed itself to the conversion of the people who inhabited the provinces, in which, as yet, he had not preached the Gospel. The proximity of Leinster to Dalradia, where at this period the Saint was, naturally fixed his attention, in the first instance, on that province. From the auspicious results that followed his preaching at Tarah, St. Patrick had learned, how greatly it would conduce towards his success in Leinster, if he could obtain for his mission the sanction of the Sovereign, who ruled over that territory. The residence of the Monarch who swayed the sceptre of Leinster was, at this time, fixed at Naas. Thither, the Saint, therefore, directed his steps. On his way to the place

of the Royal abode, Patrick had the good fortune to meet with the two sons of Dunlung, the King who then enjoyed the Sovereignty of Leinster. The two Princes, Illand and Alild were their names, listened with attention to the maxims of the Gospel. The grace of conversion rewarded their docility, and they were united to the faithful, by receiving the sacred rite of Baptism. The conduct of Foillen, an officer of the Royal household was, however, very different from that of the two Princes. Foillen had conceived a strong prejudice against the Christian religion, and was resolved to disregard every argument the Saint might use for his conversion. But fearing, it is probable, the displeasure of the two Princes, who had recently embraced the Gospel, were he to disclose his aversion to the Christian faith, Foillen affected to sleep profoundly, when St. Patrick approached, in order to confer with him on the sacred truths of religion. The perversity of the wretched man was visited on the spot with the signal vengeance of Heaven. Whilst he feigned to be indulging in repose, the fatal sleep of death sealed his eyes for ever. By the neighbouring inhabitants, the unhappy fate of Foillen was long kept in remembrance, and ever after, in their worst imprecations against an enemy, they prayed, that "his sleep might be like the sleep of Foillen in the castle of Naas."

From Naas, St. Patrick proceeded to Wicklow. Drichir, the Son-in-law of Leogaire, then held the sceptre of Wicklow. Like his Father Leogaire, Drichir was indisposed to receive the doctrine of the Gospel, and he even evinced a hostile disposition towards the Saint. Undismayed by the enmity of the Prince, St. Patrick continued to announce the truths of salvation throughout Drichir's territory. Having passed, in Wicklow, the time which he had fixed for his mission in that part of Leinster, the Saint

returned to the district of Kildare. In this district, he was now enabled to introduce many of the usages, which the Canons ordain for the good government of the Christian Church. As these usages were chiefly adapted to the circumstances of a people, among whom the faith of the Gospel was generally disseminated, the adoption of them in the district of Kildare, shows, that the inhabitants of that county were then, for the most part, brought over to Christianity.* St. Patrick now prepared to visit those parts of Leinster, where as yet, the Gospel had not been preached by him. In every place, his preaching was followed by the conversion of many of his hearers, while from those who still adhered to their paternal worship, his labours experienced but little opposition.

In one district only, the inhabitants manifested a deadly aversion to the doctrine of the Gospel. While St. Patrick was engaged in his apostolick duties in Leix, the abettors of the national superstition who resided there, conspired together to extinguish the sacred light of religion, by putting the Saint to death. Fortunately, however, the pious solicitude of a Lady, by name Briga, for the safety of the holy man discovered and defeated the plot which had been concerted against him. From Leix, St. Patrick passed into the district now known by the name of Carlow. In this territory, Dubtach resided, the illustrious convert, who had been gained over to Christianity, by the preaching of St. Patrick before the national assembly at Tarah. It was here also, that Fiech, so much celebrated in Irish history for extraordinary virtue and learning, was introduced by Dubtach to the notice of the Saint. Fiech was descended from

* Lanigan, vol. I. p. 277.

Among the Pastors whom St. Patrick appointed in this part of Leinster, the Bishops Auxilius and Iserninus are particularly mentioned.

an illustrious family in Leinster. Before the period of St. Patrick's arrival in Carlow, Fiech had been placed under the care of Dubtach, that he might be instructed in the learning, necessary to qualify him for the Bardic institute. But the piety of the master soon awakened in his pupil a thirst for the knowledge of those things, that are connected with man's eternal welfare. Fiech became a Christian, and from the time that he became acquainted with St. Patrick, he devoted his entire attention to prepare for the sacred ministry. His proficiency in piety and ecclesiastical literature soon obtained the approbation of his superiors, and having been first appointed to govern the church of Sletty, he was, in some time after, translated to the principal see in Leinster.* The success of St. Patrick's mission in Ossory was still more encouraging than that which attended his exertions in the other parts of Leinster. In different parts of Ossory, numerous congregations of Christians were formed, and several churches erected for the worship of the true God.

Of the four principal divisions of Ireland, Munster was now the only one were St. Patrick had not preached the Gospel. the lengthened period which he spent in servitude in Ulster, had made him acquainted with the general character of the inhabitants of that province, and most probably also with some particular persons among them, whose conversion, in his opinion, could be easily effected. It was natural, therefore, that the Saint should have fixed on that province, as the place where he might with most advantage commence his missionary career. The benefits which he expected from this course having been once attained, it was obviously of great importance, that he should, in the next place, make known to the chief Monarch, and to the supreme legislative

* Et tandem Lageniæ archiepiscopus institutus. *Scholiast*, No. 1. *Tripart.* L. 3, c. 21.

assembly the nature of the doctrines which he intended to preach throughout the kingdom. By adopting this precaution, he might successfully obviate many of the difficulties, which the advocates of the national superstition would try to raise up against him. The sanction of the King for the promulgation of the Gospel having been obtained, the Saint's next care was employed in the conversion of those who inhabited the districts, which were situated in the vicinity of the Royal residence at Tarah. The proximity of some of these places to the province of Connaught naturally directed his attention to that quarter of the kingdom. The Saint, moreover, retained without doubt a lively recollection of the vision, that he was favoured with in Gaul, in which the people who lived near the wood of Foclut besought him to come and dwell among them. The holy man must have been even anxious, to pay an early visit to persons, of whose sincere desire to embrace the Gospel, he had been, so long before, supernaturally assured. Besides, there is reason to suppose, that even before the arrival of St. Patrick in Ireland, the knowledge of Christianity, was more disseminated among the people of the South, than in the other quarters of the Island. The geographical situation of that portion of the kingdom, afforded many facilities for commercial intercourse with those countries on the Continent, where Christianity was established almost immediately after the first promulgation of the Gospel. Hence it appears not improbable, that Christianity was known and professed, at the opening of St. Patrick's mission, more generally in Munster, than in the other provinces.

When preparing to commence his apostolick labours in Munster, St. Patrick, in conformity with the judicious course which he had hitherto pursued, directed his steps to the Royal residence at Cashel. At this time, a Prince,

named Natfraich, swayed the sceptre of Munster. Natfraich, as soon as he was apprised of the Saint's approach, went forth graciously to meet the holy missionary, and congratulate him on his arrival in the territory of Cashel. Encouraged by the patronage, which the Sovereign thus kindly extended to him, St. Patrick began without delay, to exert his zeal in favour of the people, among whom he had for the present fixed his abode. What effect, the preaching of the Saint had on the mind of Natfraich, is not mentioned by our annalists. But the conversion of his son Aengus, is said to have been attended by an occurrence peculiarly interesting. Aengus, as soon as he had been converted to the Christain faith, was desirous to receive the sacred rite of Baptism. During the performance of the ceremonies which are used in conferring Baptism, a circumstance of a singular nature occurred. It happened, that St. Patrick, while holding the episcopal crozier in his hand, supported himself, by pressing, as he thought, on the earth, the pointed extremity of the pastoral staff. Unfortunately, however, the foot of the young Prince was struck by the crozier, and transfixed by it. The attention of St. Patrick being wholly occupied in administering the sacrament of regeneration, was prevented from observing the accident, which had befallen the Royal Neophyte. The piety of Aengus, on the other hand, persuaded the illustrious convert, that the painful infliction belonged to the ceremonial, which was to be complied with by those, who desired to be enrolled among the faithful followers of the Redeemer. It was, therefore, Aengus thought, his duty, to bear, with a calm and cheerful composure, a trial, which he regarded as a probation of his sincerity in professing the faith of Jesus Christ.* Through the interposition of Heaven,

* Cumque Partricius caput regis benedixisset, cuspis baculi affixa est pedi

or, perhaps the skilful treatment of the wound by Aengus' attendants—for it does not appear certain that the cure was effected by a miracle—the accident was not followed by any fatal consequence; on the contrary, the faith and heroic fortitude of the Royal convert appear to have obtained for him, even in this life, a particular benediction. Aengus lived to inherit his paternal sceptre, and evinced throughout life the warmest attachment to the Christian religion. Indeed the zeal of this Prince for the success of St. Patrick's mission greatly contributed to the rapid diffusion of the Gospel throughout every part of Munster.

The commencement of the Saint's labours in the southern division of Ireland having been attended with the most cheering results, the holy man now prepared to pass from Cashel to the other parts of the province. The same benediction, which accompanied his labours in Cashel, attended him also in his journey throughout every district of Munster. In several principal divisions of that province, numerous congregations of Christians were established. Here, as in the other places where he had preached the Gospel, the Saint was careful to provide for the spiritual welfare of his converts, by appointing over them pastors of whose zeal and piety he was assured.

Having spent seven years in arranging the ecclesiastical affairs of Munster, St. Patrick now wished to revisit the churches which he had founded in the other provinces of the kingdom. Before, however, he departed from Munster, the holy missionary consoled the piety of the faithful there, by predicting the birth and the eminent sanctity of some of those illustrious men, whom, after St. Patrick's death, God raised up, to renew among their countrymen the spirit of

regis. Sed Rex benedictionem valde desiderans, dolorem pedis pro nihilo reputavit.—*Third Life of St. Patrick*, c. 60.

Christian perfection. At his departure from the south of Ireland, the Saint was accompanied to the confines of the province, by many of the respectable inhabitants, and also by an immense concourse of the people. Having reached the place where they were to bid the holy man a last farewell, they besought him not to depart, until he had first given them his benediction. In compliance with their prayer, the Saint advanced to a rising ground, where turning himself towards them, he supplicated the Divine goodness, to pour down the choicest blessing on these faithful people, and on the territory which they inhabited.

It was that part of Ulster, where, immediately after his arrival in Ireland, he had successfully announced the Gospel, which St. Patrick wished now to revisit. In his journey towards that district, the Saint passed through the territory of a certain Chief, which was principally situated in the King's County. The chieftain, his name Failge, was the denomination also of the territory under his jurisdiction, was at once an inflexible adherent to his paternal superstition, and an inveterate opponent to the Christian religion. The arrival in his principality of the man, who by this time, had almost extirpated from Ireland the rites to which Failge was addicted, whetted the hostility of the Chieftain, and made him thirst for the blood of the person, whom he viewed as the main cause of the national apostacy. The opportunity now offered, seemed to the enraged Chief, to be most favourable for avenging the injury which his favourite superstition had sustained. Eager to profit of it, Failge went forth to meet the Saint.

It was not long until he came in view of the vehicle in which the holy man was travelling. Odran, the servant who accompanied St. Patrick, saw the Chieftain approach. It happened, fortunately, that Odran was admonished of

the evil design which Failge meditated against his master. Without apprizing the Saint of the impending danger, Odran requested that his master would permit him to repose for a little time in that part of the vehicle, where St. Patrick was then seated. The holy man complied at once with his servant's desire, and undertook to direct the car, while Odran slept. Meanwhile Failge approached. Deceived by the expedient which Odran had adopted to save his master's life, Failge, instead of attacking the Saint, discharged his lance at Odran. Unhappily, the lance reached its destination, and instantly deprived of life the faithful attendant of the Saint. The vengeance of Heaven is said to have soon after overtaken the guilty Chieftain. Without being admonished by any previous illness of his approaching end, the unhappy man was suddenly struck dead, while his hands were yet reeking with the blood of the virtuous Odran.

After the death of Odran, the Saint pursued his journey, without encountering any further danger. At length he reached his favourite retreat at Saul. While the holy man sojourned at Saul, another incident occurred similar to that which has been just now related. A banditti of robbers infested the vicinity of the Saint's retreat. Macaldus, a man of a daring and profligate character, was the Chief, whose orders this banditti obeyed. It happened, during the Saint's abode on this occasion at Saul, that, as he walked in a place adjoining to his habitation, he was observed by Macaldus and his companions. "Behold," the Chief exclaimed to his associates, "the impostor, who leads the people astray; let us try, whether his God be powerful or not." To decide the question, a plan was concerted, in accordance with which, one of the banditti feigned to be sick. The Saint was now called to visit this person. "One of our party," said the messenger who went to request

the attendance of the holy man, "has been taken ill, pray, sing over him some of your incantations, that so he may be restored to health." To these words the Saint replied, that he would not be suprised, if the person of whom the messenger spoke were really indisposed. On receiving this reply, the robbers turned their attention without delay to their wretched associate. Already, the impress of death was marked upon him, and the man, whom an instant before, they beheld in the full enjoyment of health, they now saw a pale and lifeless corpse. Terrified at the fatal result of their impious experiment, they with one voice exclaimed, "this is truly a man of God." Macaldus their leader was converted to Christianity, and in some time after was admitted to the sacred rite of Baptism. After his conversion, Macaldus, by the direction of St. Patrick, quitted his native country, that he might devote the remainder of his life to the practice of penance.

From the district of Lecale, in which Saul was situated, St. Patrick passed into the country now known by the name of Louth. Here he employed two years, in the unceasing discharge of the duties of his ministry. In a part of the territory, at a place not distant from the spot on which the town of Louth now stands, the Saint wished to erect the Church, which was to be governed by himself and by his successors in the episcopal dignity. But he soon abandoned this design, in consequence of an assurance which he had received, that the course he intended to follow in this instance, did not accord with the will of Heaven. Macha, distinguished at present by the name of Armagh, was appointed as the See, so the Angel declared, who revealed to him the will of Heaven, over which the Saint was to preside as Bishop. Thither, therefore, St. Patrick proceeded, and having obtained from Daire, a wealthy

inhabitant, the grant of a convenient site, he erected on it a church, and fixed his episcopal seat in the territory where this church was situated.

After the establishment of his see at Armagh, St. Patrick turned his attention to the enactment of a code of discipline, by which the pastors of the several churches which were now founded in Ireland, might be directed. In the construction of this code, the Saint was careful to profit of the advice and assistance of the more experienced among the clergy. From the tenor of the regulations, which St. Patrick enacted on this occasion, it appears, that the Gospel was then generally diffused throughout the kingdom, and that pastors were provided for the numerous Christian congregations, which were already formed in the several parts of the country.

The Apostle of Ireland had now devoted the protracted term of thirty-three years to the conversion of the Irish people. He was by this time approaching the seventy-eighth year of his age, and he felt, that the hour could not be far removed, when his earthly career would close for ever. Before he departed from life, the holy man was anxious to record the mercies, which he had received from the hands of the Most High, and which, through his ministry, God had also so abundantly dispensed to the Irish people. With these pious intentions,* the Saint composed the treatise, which is known by the name of "St. Patrick's Confession." In every page of this admirable work, we may perceive the most unequivocal proofs of his fervent gratitude for the extraordinary things which God had accomplished for the Saint himself, and for the nation to which he had been sent. Soon after St. Patrick had com-

* His motives for composing his Confession, the Saint himself declares in different parts of that treatise, pp. 3, 6, 17, &c.

pleted this pious acknowledgment of the Divine goodness, and while he was still sojourning at his favourite retreat at Saul, he was seized with his last illness. Wishing to breathe forth his spirit, in the place where he had fixed his Episcopal See, the holy man desired that he should be removed to Armagh. His attendants, in compliance with his request, hastened to convey him thither. But their haste was of no avail, for the Saint was never more to revisit the place where he so anxiously desired to die. As his attendants were conveying him to Armagh, the voice of an Angel warned the holy man to return to Saul, and await there the happy moment, which was to relieve him from his present sufferings.* In obedience to the command of the Heavenly messenger, St. Patrick went back to Saul There, after having received with devotion the holy rites of religion,† the Apostle of Ireland expired on the seventeenth day of March, four hundred and sixty five. The intelligence of St. Patrick's death was received with the deepest sorrow in every quarter of Ireland. From every province of the kingdom, the Clergy hastened, in great numbers, to Saul, to assist at the obsequies of their venerated head.‡ For several successive days, they continued to celebrate those sacred offices, which the Catholic Church prescribes in favour of her departed children. At length the day arrived, which was fixed for the interment of the Saint. A controversy now arose upon the place in which his sacred remains should be deposited. The honour of having deposited with them the precious relicks of the Apostle of Ireland, seemed to belong naturally to the people of Armagh, whose

* Probus, L. 2. Tripart. L. 3. c. 101.

† Appropinquante autem hora exitus ejus, dedit ei *sacrificium* Episcopus Tassach. Third Life, cap. 89.

‡ Clerici enim Hiberniæ confluebant ad celebrandas exequias Patricii undique. Fiech's hymn. Stroph. 31.

immediate pastor St. Patrick had been. On the other hand, during the life time of the Saint, Saul was his favourite place of retreat, the place where he had often communed with God in prayer, and implored the Divine benediction on the rising Church of Ireland. It was to Saul, that by the order of Heaven, the Saint had returned to await the call of his Creator to eternity. Such were the arguments which favoured the pretensions of those, who wished that St. Patrick should be interred at Saul. On both sides, the controversy was debated with warmth, and there was reason to fear, that the dispute could not be satisfactorily adjusted. To obviate the difficulty in which the question was involved, it was recommended, as the only means by which peace could be restored between the contending parties, that the Saint should be buried at Down. To this suggestion, all those who were concerned in the recent contest yielded a willing assent, and the precious remains of the Apostle of Ireland were conveyed with due honour to Down and deposited there.*

* Third Life, Cap. 88. Fourth, Cap. 107. Jocelin, Cap. 196. Usher's Tripartite. (Fr. p. 173.) Colgan, (Tr. Th. p. 259, seqq.) A portion of St Patrick's relicks was conveyed to Armagh, (Tr. Th. p. 262.) Usher, (888.)

CHAPTER IV.

The Primatial See of Ireland established at Armagh—Pope Eugenius the Third confers the Pallium on the Primate, and on the Metropolitans of Cashel, Dublin, and Tuam—Episcopal Sees in Ireland—their number ordered to be reduced by the Council of Kells—Chorepiscopi—Parochial Clergy—Canons of the Irish Church—Celibacy of the Clergy.

Palladius was, we have seen, the first Bishop who was appointed to watch over the interests of Christianity in Ireland. From the nature of the undertaking in which Palladius engaged, it is obvious, that, for the efficient discharge of his important office, the most ample authority over the rising church of that country must have been confided to him. On the death of Palladius, St. Patrick succeeded to him, and inherited the same authority which his predecessor enjoyed. The mission of Palladius was attended, we have shown, with only partial and transitory success. No general arrangement for the permanent regulation of the Irish Church could have been therefore established by him. But the persevering zeal of St. Patrick had triumphed over the difficulties to which Palladius had been compelled to yield, and the doctrine of the Gospel was by his exertions happily diffused throughout the entire kingdom. The welfare

of religion now required, that the Saint should provide for the permanent administration and discipline of the National Church. To these important matters, St. Patrick therefore directed his earnest attention, as soon as he had gained over the Irish people to the Christian religion. Before the Saint had promoted to the dignity of Bishop any of his fellow labourers in the mission, the episcopal superintendence of each congregation devolved on himself alone. But, as the number of the converts daily augmented, and as the duties which appertained to him as Bishop were proportionably multiplied, it became necessary, that he should be assisted in the discharge of his functions by Pastors of the Episcopal order. What was the number of such Pastors which the necessities of the Irish Church demanded? Where should these Prelates fix their respective sees? What were the limits, by which the jurisdiction of each Bishop should be regulated? All these were questions, on which the Apostle of Ireland was himself to determine.

In fixing the mode of government, by which the Universal Church was to be administered after his ascension into Heaven, the Redeemer had wisely provided for the maintenance of unity, by conferring the primacy of honour and of authority on St. Peter, and the lawful successors of that Saint in the Apostolick See. That a like wise economy was adopted from the earliest ages of Christianity, in arranging the order of the Hierarchy in each country, the most ancient ecclesiastical annals bear testimony. In every part of these annals, mention is frequently made of certain Bishops, who, besides governing their own particular sees, exercised also a superintendence over other dioceses. The government of the Irish church, St. Patrick regulated according to the form, which the received usage of every Christian country had then sanctioned. His own See, the Saint, in obedience to a special

manifestation of the Divine will, had permanently established at Armagh. To his lawful successor in that See, the same pre-eminence in honour and authority which St. Patrick enjoyed, was therefore to descend. This St. Patrick himself predicted in the celebrated prophecy, in which he marked out Benignus as the heir to his spiritual prerogatives. Benignus was the son of Seschnen, the person by whom St. Patrick had been so kindly received, when the Saint was preparing to open his mission at Tarah. Seschnen and his family having been converted on this occasion to the Gospel, were baptized by St. Patrick. The singular suavity of disposition, which Benignus, who was yet a child, exhibited, attracted the particular attention of the Saint towards him. In his happy disposition, St. Patrick discovered the germ of the exalted virtues, for which, in after life, Benignus was so greatly distinguished. The name Benignus, which he received at Baptism, St. Patrick conferred on him, in order to denote the extraordinary kindness of disposition, for which, even in his childhood, he was conspicuous. His early love of Christian perfection would, it was easy to foresee, lead him, in maturer life, to the service of the sanctuary. To qualify him for the sacred office, for which he was so evidently designed by the Divine Providence, St. Patrick gladly undertook the care of his education, predicting, at the same time, that Benignus would be the heir to his authority, and the supreme ruler of the Irish Church. The event, observes one of St. Patrick's biographers, justified the prediction.* The fame which Benignus, as he advanced in

* Hic heres regni mei erit, hoc est, erit post me supremus Ecclesiæ Hibernicæ moderator .... ut omnium judicio dignus habitus sit, qui magistro suo S. Patricio in archiepiscopatu Ardmachano primatu Hiberniæ succederet. *Tripart.* L. 1. c. 45.

In regimine pontificatus primatusque totius Hiberniæ successit S. Patricio. *Jocelin*, c. 39.

years, acquired for learning and for the splendour of his miracles, fixed the attention of his countrymen on him, and marked him out, as the person most worthy to inherit the pre-eminence of honour and authority which St. Patrick enjoyed. In effect, after the death of the Apostle of Ireland, Benignus was chosen to succeed him, and in this exalted station, discharged the great trust reposed in him with such fidelity, as to justify the hopes, which his elevation had excited. After a happy and successful administration of the Primatial See, Benignus was succeeded by St. Jarlath, a Prelate, not less distinguished than his predecessor for Apostolick virtues. For a long series of ages, the dignity of Metropolitan was exclusively enjoyed in Ireland by the Archbishop of Armagh. The universal veneration of the Irish people for the See which St. Patrick governed was so great, says St. Bernard, that to the Bishop of Armagh every Prince and Bishop throughout the kingdom rendered entire obedience, in things spiritual, and the Primate alone exercised jurisdiction over all.* At length, in the twelfth century, Celsus, who then presided over the Irish Church, advanced the Bishop of Cashel to the rank of Metropolitan of Munster.† Before the twelfth century, indeed, the title of Archbishop distinguished the Prelate who governed the

* Speaking of Celsus, St. Bernard says, "Sancti Patricii auctoritate praecepit cujus reverentia et honore tanquam apostoli illius gentis, qui totam patriam convertisset ad fidem, sedes illa, in qua et vivens praefuit et mortuus requiescit, in tanta ab inito *cunctis* veneratione habetur, ut non modo episcopi et sacerdotes, et qui de clero sunt, sed etiam regum et principum univeritas subjecta sit metropolitano in omni obedientia (ecclesiastica) *et unus ipse omnibus præsit.* *Vit. S. Mal. Cap.* 7.

† There was, says St. Bernard, another metropolitical See, which Celsus had newly appointed: yet subject to the first See, and to its Archbishop as Primate. That Cashel is the See to which St. Bernard here refers, appears from the circumstance, that the Bishop of that diocese is the only one, who, besides the Primate is called Archbishop, in the account of the Synod of Fiadh-mac—Aengussa. Mac Mahon confirms this opinion. *Jus Prim.* Nos. 7. 62. 201.

See of Cashel from the Bishops of the other Southern dioceses of Ireland. But from the language and the mode of proceeding adopted by Celsus at the national Synod, over which he presided, it would seem probable, that the title of Archbishop was given to the Prelate, who governed the See of Cashel, only to express some honorary precedency, and not as an indication, that the Bishop of that diocese was invested previously to the time of Celsus, with the jurisdiction of a Metropolitan.* In raising the Bishop of Cashel to the dignity of Metropolitan, Celsus was not however unmindful of what he owed to the See, over which he himself presided. While he willingly conferred the Archiepiscopal honour and authority on that Prelate, he by no means intended to interfere with the established prerogatives of St. Patrick's successor. In virtue of the pre-eminence, which the See of Armagh still retained, we find, in some years after, St. Malachy holding a visitation of the several dioceses, that were situated in the territory of Munster. But though the pre-eminence of the See of Armagh was always acknowledged, the Bishop of that diocese had not before the time of Malachy received the Pallium, the usual badge of the Metropolitical authority.† In those times, as in the present, the use of the Pallium, was confided chiefly to Prelates, who were invested with the dignity of Archbishop.

At what particular period of the church, this badge of

* Had the Bishop of Cashel enjoyed the rank and authority of Metropolitan before the time of Celsus, it would have been obviously an idle and unmeaning ceremony for Celsus, to confer that dignity on him in a publick Synod, or for St. Malachy to apply, as he afterwards did, to the Pope, to confirm the new dignity which Celsus had conferred on the Bishop of that See.

† In the Jewish dispensation, the pectoral of the High Priest distinguished him from the other subordinate ministers. The expediency of appropriating a like distinction to the more exalted members of the Christian Hierarchy suggested, it is probable, the use of the Pallium.—*Vid. Divoti. Instit. Juris. Can.*

ecclesiastical dignity was first introduced, cannot, at this time, be satisfactorily determined. That, so early as the sixth century, it was used in the Western Church, and was conferred by the Roman Pontiff, as a mark, whereby they recognised as a Metropolitan, the Prelate on whom it was bestowed, may be shown from the authentick records of that age. In some very few instances, indeed, the use of the Pallium appears to have been conceded to certain Bishops, who were not invested with the Archiepiscopal dignity. But, in these cases, the concession was designed to be the reward of distinguished merit, or was occasioned by some extraordinary contingency. At present, and for some preceding ages, the discipline of the Latin Church has restricted the use of the Pallium, almost exclusively to Bishops invested with the rank of Metropolitans.* In every period, since the Pallium first began to be used, we find, that the greatest importance was attached to the concession of this honour by the Apostolick See. According to the usage which now prevails, and which appears to have the sanction of remote antiquity, a Metropolitan is forbidden to exercise the more important offices of his station, until he has first received the Pallium from the Chief pastor of the Catholic Church.† Nor was the right of conferring this badge of ecclesiastical pre-eminence, one which was devoid of benefit to the interests of religion. To obtain the Pallium, the Metropolitan was formerly required, to appear in person before the Supreme Pontiff, in order that his qualifications for that high office might be examined, before his election was confirmed by the sentence of the Holy Father.‡

* Singulari privilegio Cardinalis Episcopus Ostiensis, cum Romanum Pontificem consecrat, pallio utitur, et beneficio etiam Sedis Apostolicæ quibusdam Episcopis pallii usus concessus est.—*Divoti.* vol. 1, p. 221.

† Vid. Institut. Canon. Divoti. L. 1. P. 214. &c.

‡ Lingard's Anglo-Saxon Church, p. 163.

By this wise precaution, it was rendered more difficult for an unworthy candidate, who might possess sufficient influence to secure the suffrages of the electors in . s favour, to succeed eventually, in obtaining the preferment which he ambitioned. From the law, which required the personal attendance at Rome of the candidate for the dignity of Metropolitan, the clergy of remote countries were, indeed, sometimes exempted;* yet, even in their regard, the r ile v as oftentimes enforced, and the newly elected Prelate, however remote his country might be from Rome, was obliged to appear in person before the Supreme Pontiff. In every part of the Church, the usage at length prevailed, that Bishops, invested with the dignity of Metropolitans, should be honoured with the Pallium, which thus became the distinguishing badge of Archiepiscopal jurisdiction. To obtain this favour for the Metropolitans of Armagh and Cashel, St. Malachy resolved to visit the Apostolick See.† St. Malachy, while he presided over the Primatial See of Armagh—for, at this time he had retired to the See of Down—introduced various regulations of great importance to the welfare of religion. These enactments, St. Malachy desired to render permanent, by procuring for them the sanction of the Chief Pastor of the Catholic Church. The announcement, that the Saint intended to journey to Rome, in order to accomplish the several purposes which he contemplated, was by no means acceptable, either to the clergy or to the people under his spiritual care. The Irish Church had then recently to lament the death of Christian, the brother of St. Malachy, a Prelate, whose great virtues had obtained for him the respect and affection of his countrymen. The fear, lest some accident might befal their venerated Pastor, while he

* Lingard's Anglo-Saxon Church, p. 221.

† Metropoliticæ sedi deerat adhuc et defuerat ab initio pallii usus.—*St. Bernard, Vita St. Malach.*

was engaged in so tedious and perilous an undertaking, as that which he meditated, alarmed the pious solicitude of his flock, and made them altogether adverse to his proposed journey. But Malachy was not to be diverted from the resolution which he had adopted with the view of promoting the future welfare of religion in Irelend. He accordingly persevered in his endeavours to obtain their consent for his undertaking. At length, overcome by his entreaties, they acquiesced in his proposal. The Saint being now at liberty to depart, first passed over into Britain, and from thence into France. When journeying through France, St. Malachy visited Clairvaux, and there formed with St. Bernard, an acquaintance which their admiration of each other's piety soon matured into the warmest friendship. From France, the Saint travelled over the Alps, into Italy. The journey of the holy Prelate over the Alps was, St. Bernard relates, illustrated by the following miracle. The child of a person, at whose house he chanced to stop, lay then at the point of death. Overcome by the heart-rending afflictions, which the parents of the child endured, the holy man offered up his fervent prayers to Heaven, in behalf of the expiring infant. The prayer of the Saint ascended before the throne of the Most High, and was favourably heard. Without delay, and almost in the same instant in which the man of God had concluded his supplication, the symptoms of approaching death began to disappear, and the child was immediately restored to perfect health.* The Saint now pursued his journey to Rome. At the period when he arrived at Rome, the Chair of St. Peter was filled by Innocent, the second Pope of that name. The Saint was honoured with an early introduction to the

* St. Bernard, Vit. S. Malach. Cap. 7.

Pontiff. Innocent received the holy man in the most kind and affectionate manner, and listened with attention to his representations concerning the Irish Church. The petitions, which the Saint preferred with regard to the Primatial Church of Armagh, he accompanied with an earnest prayer, that he might be permitted to spend the remainder of his days in the monastery of Clairvaux. To this request, the Pontiff returned a peremptory refusal. The best interests of religion in Ireland, required, at that time, that a Prelate of Malachy's high repute for wisdom and sanctity, should continue to watch over and provide for the welfare of the National Church. St. Malachy, though he ardently desired to labour for his own sanctification in the seclusion of a monastic life, yielded a ready obedience to the decision of his superior. Innocent having now decided on the first part of the petition which the Saint preferred, inquired, in the next place, with great minuteness, into the state of the Irish Church. On the manners and customs of the Irish people the Pontiff also expressed a wish, that Malachy and his companions would give him every information. The last inquiry of the Pope regarded the conduct of St. Malachy himself. How, the Pontiff wished to be informed, had St. Malachy been employed, since he had been elevated to his present station, and what efforts had he made to promote the cause of religion in the church confided to his pastoral care? To these various interrogatories, St. Malachy returned a satisfactory reply. The Pontiff, in testimony of his approbation of the zeal and ability with which the Saint had discharged the duties of his exalted office, then appointed St. Malachy Apostolick Legate for all Ireland. A favourable opportunity now offered, to petition the Pope, to honour the chief See of Ireland, by conferring the Pallium on the Archbishop of

Armagh. St. Malachy availed himself of the occasion to prefer this request, and as the Bishop of Cashel had been recently advanced to the rank of Metropolitan, the Saint petitioned, that the same favour should be extended to that Prelate also. The arrangements, which the Primate had made with regard to the See of Cashel, Innocent willingly ratified. But on the expediency of granting the Pallium at present to either of the Irish Metropolitans, the Pontiff entertained some doubts.* That was a concession, which the Clergy and the People of Ireland should first be taught duly to appreciate. The petition for such a favour should emanate, Innocent remarked, not from one person only, but from the united Clergy and People of the country, for the Metropolitans of which, the honour of the Pallium was requested. If the Clergy and People of Ireland joined together, in such a petition to the holy See, Innocent promised, that he would then listen favourably to the request, and send the Pallium to the Irish Metropolitans. The Pope having pronounced his final decision on this question, and the other objects of St. Malachy's mission being accomplished, the Saint took leave of the Holy Father, and prepared to return home. Innocent gladly embraced this occasion, to express in the strongest manner his regard for the holy Prelate. As Malachy was preparing to retire from the place where he was admitted to the presence of the Pontiff, Innocent rose from his seat, and taking off his mitre, he placed it on the head of the Saint. The Pontiff next presented Malachy with the stole and maniple, which he himself used when he officiated, and then saluting the Saint with the kiss of peace, dismissed him with his benediction.

* Though the Pallium was at this time conferred, perhaps generally, on Archbishops, still there was as yet no rule made, by which every Meropolitan was entitled to demand it.

For some years after St. Malachy had returned to Ireland, no steps seem to have been taken to procure the Pallium for either of the Irish Metropolitans. In quality of Apostolick Legate, St. Malachy visited every portion of the Church of Ireland, and exercised in each district the authority confided to him, in reforming the prevailing abuses, and in promoting the practice of the Gospel virtues. At length, a favourable opportunity for soliciting anew the favour which he had before ineffectually petitioned for, presented itself. In the year eleven hundred and forty-five, Eugenius the Third was raised to St. Peter's Chair. Eugenius had been a disciple of St. Bernard, and a monk of the celebrated monastery of Clairvaux. The visit which Malachy had made to Clairvaux, gave him an opportunity of becoming acquainted with St. Bernard, and the acquaintance of these two holy men was now matured into the most ardent friendship. St. Malachy hoped, that his close intimacy with St. Bernard would influence the newly elected Pontiff, to receive favourably his petition, and grant the Pallium to the Irish Metropolitans. With this hope, the Saint proposed to make a journey to Clairvaux, in order to prefer his request to the Pope, who, at that time happened to be sojourning there. The answer which the Saint had formerly received from Pope Innocent, admonished him, however, that his petition to be successful should be supported by the concurrence of the Irish Clergy. Previously to his former journey to Rome, the Saint had resigned to Gelasius the Primatial See of Armagh, and retained for himself the diocese of Down, for which he had been originally consecrated. Having, therefore, in compliance with the deference due to the present Primate Gelasius, consulted with that Prelate, on the expediency of assembling together the Clergy, that they might unite together in petitioning the Pope, to confer the Pallium on the Irish

Metropolitans, a national Synod was convened at Holmpatrick.* In this council, the several arrangements, which St. Malachy proposed, as likely to influence the Pontiff in favour of the intended request were unanimously adopted. To the proposal, however, that the Saint himself should journey to Clairvaux and present their petition to Eugenius, the Synod was at first unwilling to accede. But the earnestness with which the holy man urged the assembled Clergy to assent to his desire on this subject, succeeded at length in overcoming their reluctance. After a quick passage, St. Malachy reached in safety the neighbouring shore of Scotland. From thence he proceeded by land to Britain. From one of the British ports, the Saint hoped, that he should find a ready means of conveyance to France. Unfortunately, however, Stephen, who then swayed the English sceptre, in consequence of some disputes with his Clergy, prohibited any Bishop to set sail from his dominions for France, as soon as he received intelligence of the Pope's arrival in that country. In this prohibition, it was obvious, that St. Malachy, who owed no obedience to the English Sovereign, was not included. Yet so great was the exactness, with which the prohibition was enforced, even with regard to ecclesiastics not belonging to England, that St. Malachy would not be permitted to embark for France, until he had first obtained the special permission of the King.† Before this permission could be obtained, Eugenius had departed from Clairvaux, in order to return to Italy. St. Malachy, notwithstanding, resolved to continue his journey. But soon after the holy Prelate had arrived at

* Fifteen Bishops, Two hundred Priests, and a considerable number of the inferior Clergy assisted at this Synod. *Life of Gelasius*, cap. 15. *Annals of Innisfallen*, A. 1148.

† St. Bernard, Vit. S. Malach. cap. 16. *Messingham.*

Clairvaux, he was seized with his last illness. The violence of his disease terminated his sufferings in a few days. The short interval that was allowed to him, the Saint employed in the most fervent acts of piety, and of entire resignation to the Divine will. Having received the last Sacraments with the most edifying manifestation of a tender and exalted piety, the holy man raised his eyes to Heaven, and concluded a pathetick exhortation to the assembled brethren, with the following affecting prayer: "O God preserve them in thy name, and not only them, but likewise all those, who through my words and ministry have engaged in thy service." The Saint next imparted his benediction to each of the brethren, and then awaited with the most tranquil composure the hour, when he was to be separated from them for ever. That hour was not remote. About the middle of the night—it was the night which immediately succeeded the feast of All Souls,* the very night on which the holy man had often during life expressed a wish to die, the Saint resigned his soul into the hands of his Creator.

The death of St. Malachy interrupted, for a time, the progress of the measures, which the Irish Clergy had adopted, in order to obtain the Pallium for the Metropolitans of Armagh and Cashel. But the delay, which this melancholy event occasioned, was not of long duration. In about three years after the death of the Saint, Pope Eugenius ordered Cardinal Paparo to proceed, as his Apostolick Legate to Ireland, and confer on the Metropolitans of the Irish Church, the favour which St. Malachy had intended to supplicate from the Pontiff. In obedience to the command of the Holy Father, Paparo commenced his journey to Ireland. But when he had arrived in England

* A. D. 1148. For the account of St. Malachy's death, vid. St. Bernard, cap. 16, 17, and seqq.

an unexpected impediment prevented the execution of his design. From the commencement of his reign, Stephen, who was then the reigning Monarch, had been engaged in angry contentions with his Clergy, on ecclesiastical property and immunities. The arrival of the Legate in England, awakened his apprehensions, lest Paparo, under the assumed pretence of going to Ireland to confer the Pallium on the Irish Metropolitans, might interfere with the privileges which Stephen conceived to belong to the British Crown. To guard against this danger, Stephen refused permission to the Legate, to pass through the kingdom, unless Paparo should first swear, that in his progress through England, he would do nothing to prejudice the prerogatives, which the Monarch claimed. The Cardinal offended at the proposal of Stephen, rejected it, as derogatory from the respect which was due to the Legatine dignity. Without making any further effort to accomplish the object of his mission, the Legate now resolved to return to Rome. The report of Stephen's conduct soon reached the Holy See, and, as might be anticipated, gave great displeasure to Eugenius. The Pope, unwilling to allow his intentions regarding the Irish Church, to be frustrated by the perverse policy of the English Sovereign, ordered Paparo to proceed to Ireland, by a different route from that, which the Cardinal had, at first, proposed to follow. Instead of coming to England, the Cardinal now directed his course to Scotland. Here he was honourably received by David, the Sovereign who then occupied the Scottish throne.* After a short delay in Scotland, the Legate set out for Ireland, where, in a few days, he arrived in safety. At the period of the Legate's arrival, Gelasius

* Fleury Hist. Eccles. L. 69, 162.

still continued to hold the Primatial See of Armagh. The superior dignity of the station which Gelasius occupied, entitled this Prelate to be honoured with the first visit of the Pope's representative. Paparo accordingly repaired without delay, to Armagh, the place of the Primate's residence. During his visit, the Legate deliberated with Gelasius, on the propriety of convoking a national Synod, in order that the Papal commission might be executed with due solemnity. The expediency of convening the Clergy having been decided on, a Synod was accordingly held at Kells,* on the ninth day of March, in the year eleven hundred and fifty-two. In executing the various functions of his Legatine office, Paparo was assisted on this occasion, by Christian, Bishop of Lismore. After the death of St. Malachy, Christian had been appointed Apostolick Legate for Ireland.† In consequence, it would seem, of this appointment, Christian had constantly attended on the Cardinal, since Paparo had arrived in Ireland, and he continued afterwards to assist the Legate, in establishing those regulations, which the welfare of the Irish Church were then deemed to require. To the mandate which ordered the convention of the Synod at Kells, the greater part of the Irish Bishops yielded obedience. Among the Episcopal body, as well as among the inferior Clergy, there were, however, some, who declined to sanction, by their presence, a measure, which they had learned, that Paparo intended to adopt, as soon as the Synod should have been convened. The measure to which these persons were opposed related to the erection of two Archiepiscopal Sees in Ireland,

* Annals of Clonenagh, quoted by Keating, book 2, p. 104; and by Colgan, Tr. Th. p. 306.

† Hence he is represented in some accounts of the Synod of Kells, as having presided in that assembly.

in addition to those already established at Armagh and Cashel. The Bishops of Tuam and of Dublin, were the Prelates whom the Legate designed to raise to the rank of Metropolitans. These bishops, Paparo was instructed to honour with the Pallium, at the same time that he conferred this distinction on the Metropolitans of Armagh and Cashel. To this arrangement the Clergy of Down and Armagh were particularly adverse.* The legate, without paying any regard to their absence from the Synod, or to the opposition which they manifested, proceeded to execute his instructions in the presence of such of the Clergy as had obeyed his summons, and he accordingly invested with the Pallium, the Chief Pastors of the Churches of Armagh, Cashel, Dublin, and Tuam.† In dispensing this honour, the Legate was not however unmindful of the peculiar distinction to which the See of Armagh was entitled, and agreeably to ancient usage, he recognised Gelasius, as the Primate of all Ireland.‡

What number of Episcopal Sees St. Patrick established in Ireland cannot at this time be satisfactorily determined. From the narratives, however, of the ancient Irish annalists, it appears certain, that, anciently, ecclesiasticks of the Episcopal order were more numerous in the Irish Church, than they usually were in the other Western Churches. In Britain, for example, after the Gospel had been established there, each of the first Saxon dioceses was generally commensurate with the kingdom of the heptarchy, in which the See was founded. In Ireland, on the contrary, the

* Keating as quoted by Colgan, (A. A. S. S. p. 654, and 776.) Dr. O'Connor, 2. Prol. p. 159.

† Hovedon, A. 1151.

‡ Insuper Ardmachanum archiepiscopum in primatem super alios, ut decuit, ordinavit.—*Annals of Cluain-eidneach.* In all the lists of the Prelates who attended at the Synod, Gelasius is named first.

number of Bishops which was distributed throughout the Island, even in the time of St. Patrick, appears to have been so great, that but a very small extent of territory could have been subject to the spiritual jurisdiction of each Prelate. In the history of the occurrences which took place during the early part of St. Patrick's mission in Ireland, we find mention made of three of his disciples, who returned to his assistance from some distant country, whither they had gone to receive the rite of Episcopal consecration.* Besides these, there were also many other Bishops, who, according to the testimony of our most approved writers, were contemporaries of St. Patrick, and had been consecrated by that Saint. Indeed, from the tenor of the most ancient canons of the Irish Church, it is certain, that Bishops were appointed throughout the greater part of the kingdom, almost immediately after the conversion of the inhabitants. These canons, and some of them have been ascribed by the most discerning critics to the age of St. Patrick,† order the inferior Clergy to have recourse to the Bishop in such numerous instances, that to render a compliance with this injunction practicable,‡ Bishops must have been numerously distributed throughout Ireland.

* Secundinus et Auxiliarius (Auxilius) et Esserninus mittuntur in auxillium Patricii; nec tamen tenuerunt apostolatum, nisi Patricius solus.—*Usher, Ind. Chron. From the Annals of Ulster and Innisfallen.*

† Those, namely, which were enacted at the Synod which is stated to havebeen held at Armagh, by Patrick, Auxilius and Isserninus. Tillemont confesses, that there is no reason for questioning the authority of these Canons, (*Mem. &c.* Tom. 16. p. 786.) *Spelman Concil.* Tom. 1. p. 53. and *Wilkins Concil.* M. B. Tom. 1. p. 2. place in the year 456, the Synod, at which the Canons just now alluded to were enacted.

‡ Thus the twenty-third Canon ordains, that a priest shall not offer sacrifice in a newly built Church, until the Church shall have been first consecrated by his Bishop. The twenty-fourth Canon prohibits a strange Clergyman to officiate, unless he be permitted to do so by the Bishop, and the thirtieth forbids any Bishop to hold an ordination in the diocese of another Prelate, unless the latter shall have previously given his consent. These regulations clearly suppose, that Bishops were distributed throughout the several parts of the Irish Church.

Indeed the ancient discipline of the Church of Ireland appears to have been very favourable to the erection of dioceses, which, if compared with the present Irish Sees, were necessarily much more limited in extent. Nor was this discipline devoid of many peculiar advantages. For, each diocese being thus confined to a small territory, the Bishop could, without difficulty, watch over and provide for the spiritual wants of the people confided to his pastoral care. The minute attention, which each Prelate was thus enabled to give to his flock, must have been productive of the most important advantages to a people, who were only recently converted to the Christian faith. In effect, the system which the Irish Church formerly adopted with regard to the erection of Episcopal Sees, was entirely similar to that, which was followed in those churches, that were founded immediately after the time of the Apostles. According to this system, every town, where the converts to the Gospel were numerous, was honoured by the appointment of a Bishop who resided permanently there, and who devoted his pastoral solicitude exclusively to the care of its inhabitants.* This ancient usage, the Fathers of the Council of Sardica thought it necessary to modify. To maintain the respectability of the Episcopal order, the Council of Sardica ordered, that, for the time to come, Bishops should take up their residence, only in the more important towns of the country to which they belonged. This ordinance was, however, only partially carried into effect, for some time after its enactment,† and in various parts of the Church, the usage previously received continued to prevail. But, at length, the wisdom of the rule laid down

* Fleury, Instit. au Droit Eccles. part 1, ch. 3.

† Bingham, book 2, chap. 12.

by the Fathers of Sardica began to be generally acknowledged, and the former system, regarding the multiplication of Episcopal Sees, was gradually abandoned.

In Ireland, the inconvenience that arose from the ancient system, was greatly aggravated by the prevalence of another custom, which seems both to have been more generally received, and to have continued longer there, than in any of the other Western Churches. The custom here spoken of, relates to the appointment of that class of assistant Bishops, who are distinguished by the appellation of Chorepiscopi. From the earliest ages of Christianity, it was usual to relieve the solicitude of a Bishop, whom age, infirmity, or other causes had rendered unequal to the discharge of the laborious duties of his station, by assigning to him a Coadjutor, who, whenever it was necessary, might supply the place of the Chief Pastor.* The nature of the office, which such a Coadjutor had to discharge, made it necessary for him to receive, at his appointment, the rite of Episcopal consecration.

Besides assistant Bishops of this description, there were also others, of a yet more subordinate dignity. Of this last named class of Prelates, the earliest records of ecclesiastical history make mention.† The care of the numerous faithful, who inhabited the town, where the Bishop ordinarily resided, frequently engrossed so much of his attention, as to leave him but little leisure, for ministering to the spiritual wants of the other members of his flock, who

* In the earliest ages of the Church we find instances that justify this assertion. Thus, St. Linus was appointed Coadjutor to St. Peter, Evaristus to Pope Anacletus, St. Augustine to Valerius, Athanasius to Alexander, &c.

† Quemadmodum Episcopi, cum propter mortem, aut ingravescentem aetatem suo recte munere fungi non poterant in *civitate*, Coadjutores habebant, ita cum nimis late patebat dioecesis, in pagis atque oppidis longe dissitis habebant, Chorepiscopos adjutores laborum suorum.—*Diroti Instit. Canon*, T. 1, p. 225.

dwelt in the country, at a distance from the Chief Pastor's place of abode. To remedy this inconvenience, the Bishop sometimes deemed it expedient, to confide to certain Clergymen selected by himself, the care of the faithful, who resided in the remote parts of his diocese. That the Clergymen thus chosen were usually invested with a species of episcopal jurisdiction, in the district where they presided, appears certain. But whether they were or were not always invested with the holy order of Episcopacy, is a question, which has not been yet definitively adjusted.*

In this case, as in many other controversies, the truth may perhaps be found to lie between the contending parties. If this suggestion be just, the correct inference will be, that the ecclesiasticks of whom we now speak, received, along with the jurisdiction that was conferred on them, the rite of episcopal consecration, wheresoever, the custom of any particular country, or the Prelate by whom they were chosen, sanctioned their promotion to the holy order of Episcopacy. In Ireland, the usage of conferring the Episcopal consecration on these ecclesiasticks, appears to have been that which was, generally, perhaps even universally, adopted.†

The early annalists of Ireland give ordinarily such a repre-

* De his scil. Chorepiscopis quaeri solet, num Episcopi, an tantum Presbyteri fuerint; sed longe probabilior est sententia illorum, qui eos meros Presbyteros fuisse arbitrantur.—*Divoti, Ibid.*

Interdum vero Chorepiscopi etiam erant Episcopi, quod recte observant Cabassutius. Notit. Concil. cap. 3. Petrus de Marca Cancord sacerdot et imper. lib. 2. cap. 13. Bellarminus, de Cleric. lib. 1. cap. 17. p. 139. atque ad hos pertinent canones omnes conciliorum quibus Chorepiscopis cum venia Episcopi Diaconos, et Praesbyteros ordinare permittitur.—*Divoti*, Not. 1. p. 226. & 227. Tom. 1.

† The following writers hold the opinion that the Chorepiscopi were always, without exception, invested with the order of Episcopacy :—*Hammond*, diss. 3. conti. *Blondel*, *c.* 8. *Beveredge*, Not. in conc. *Ancyran*, can. 13. *Bingham*, Orig. Eccles. lib. 2. cap. 14. sect. 4.

sentation of the Prelates whom we now speak of, and of the functions which these dignitaries administered, as shows that they regarded these ecclesiasticks as really belonging to the episcopal order. On each occasion, on which any clergyman of this description is introduced by our historians to the reader's notice, he is honoured with the appellation of Bishop,* nor is this appellation accompanied with any restriction, which would suggest, that the title thus given, ought not to be received in its ordinary but in a secondary or particular signification. Hence it happens, that oftentimes the Chorepiscopi cannot be distinguished from the Prelates under whose direction they acted, and to whom in point of jurisdiction they were subordinate, except by the casual introduction of some circumstance, that indicates their dependance on the Bishop of the See where they exercised their functions. Thus we find mention made by the Irish writers, of certain Bishops who discharged the duties of their office in different provinces, or in different dioceses ; and as the general discipline of the Church has always obliged the ordinary of each diocese, to exercise, only within the limits of his own See, the peculiar functions of the Episcopal order, we may infer, that these Prelates acted in the subordinate capacity of assistants to the ordinaries who governed the several dioceses of Ireland.

That the custom, which sanctioned the appointment of assistant Bishops, should, in the course of time, multiply to an inconvenient extent the members of the Episcopal body in Ireland, might be naturally anticipated by those, who first introduced that usage into the Irish Church. Yet no means appear to have been adopted by them, to guard against an inconvenience, which it was so easy to foresee.

* The Irish had but one name for Bishops and Chorepiscopi.—*Lanigan*, Vol, 2. p. 129.

In his life of St. Malachy, St. Bernard complains in the strongest terms, of the inconvenience that resulted from the extraordinary number of ecclesiasticks, who in his time exercised the functions of the episcopacy in Ireland. The inconvenience, he tells us, had then so much increased, that almost every church throughout the kingdom was governed by a Bishop, whose care was thus confined exclusively to a congregation, which could not have been numerous. At length, the Bishops who attended the Council of Kells, resolved to remedy an evil, which injured the reputation of the Irish hierarchy in foreign countries, and prejudiced the maintenance of discipline in Ireland. A regulation was accordingly enacted by that Synod, that according as each of the assistant Bishops in Ireland should die, his place should be supplied by a Priest, to be chosen by the Diocesan.* By this arrangement every cause of complaint was, in course of time, effectually removed.

The number of episcopal sees established in Ireland during the life-time of St. Patrick, cannot, it has been remarked, be now satisfactorily determined.† From the Canons which have been above referred to, we can merely deduce, that almost immediately after the introduction of Christianity into that country, Bishops were appointed in different parts of the kingdom, to watch over the infancy of the rising Church, and to minister to the spiritual wants of the people. After the death of St. Patrick, the Episcopal Sees in Ireland were, at different periods, augmented in number. To this augmentation different circumstances contributed. It was

* Rochfort's Constitutions, passed at Newtown in the year 1216; (ap. Wilkins, Concilia, &c., vol. 1, p. 547.) In these it is stated, that a decree had been passed in the Council of Kells, that according as the Chorepiscopi and Bishops of smaller sees should die, Arch-priests, appointed by the Diocesans, &c., were to be placed in their stead.

† An account of the ancient disposition of the Bishoprics of Ireland, is subjoined in the appendix.

in many cases, rendered necessary by the constantly increasing numbers of those, who were converted to the Christian faith. In other instances, especially after the Danish invasion, the political situation of such of the invaders, as embraced the Gospel, made it necessary to erect new Sees in the places where the Danes had fixed their abode. From the history of the Synod of Kells, it appears, that besides the four Metropolitan Sees which was established by this council, there were thirty-four Suffragan Dioceses in the several parts of the kingdom. In that Synod, the expediency of reducing the number of the Suffragan Sees was discussed and resolved upon. The means appointed for carrying the resolution into effect, were similar to those, by which the reduction of the assistant Bishops was to be accomplished. To this enactment of the Council, the most punctual attention was immediately given. In the space of about thirty years, from the passing of this decree, at Kells, three dioceses situated in the territory of Meath, were united, and placed under the jurisdiction of the same Bishop.* The same means which were used to reduce the number of the Sees in the principality of Meath, were resorted to, according as an opportunity offered, in the other parts of the kingdom.

When Christianity was first propagated throughout the nations of the universe, the humble condition of the chief ministers of the Gospel, made the potentates of the earth but little solicitous about the mode, by which Bishops or any other spiritual functionaries were elected. But when kings themselves were enrolled among the followers of the Saviour, the importance of exercising a certain control over

* In the commencement of the thirteenth century, when Simon Rochfort was Bishop of Meath, the old Episcopal Churches of Trim, Kells, Slane, Skrine, and Dunshaughlin, were governed by Arch-priests. Duleek, Ardbraccan, and Fore, were also suppressed, and included in the Diocese of Meath, but at what precise time cannot be determined.

ecclesiastical elections, soon attracted their attention, and they became anxious, that such Clergymen only, as found favour with them, should be promoted to the Episcopal dignity. By this means, they hoped to strengthen the stability of their throne, and to secure the support of an influential portion of the Clergy, in favour of the political measures which they desired to effect. The interference of the Sovereign on these occasions, prejudiced, not unfrequently, the liberty of the electors, and the welfare of religion. Indeed, where such interference was permitted, it must have often occurred, that the moral or literary qualifications of the candidate, who was supported by the Royal patronage, were either entirely overlooked, or but partially examined. The tendency of the candidate's politics, or the influence of his family connections, were topics, on which the Sovereign was more likely to desire information, than on matters, which, in a worldly point of view, were of a speculative and subordinate character. The perversity of the system, which allowed the Monarch to interfere in the choice of those, who were to be advanced to the highest offices of the Church, was deeply deplored by such of the Laity and the Clergy, as felt a lively interest in the welfare of religion. The Roman Pontiffs, in particular, were distinguished, in every age, for the persevering firmness, with which they opposed the encroachments of the temporal power on the freedom of ecclesiastical elections. For a lengthened period, the history of Europe contains little else than a painful detail of the struggles for superiority, which were carried on respecting this subject, between the spiritual and temporal authorities. Fortunately for the welfare of religion in Ireland, the peace of that country was not disturbed by such unworthy conflicts. In the election of a Bishop, the wishes of the temporal Prince were not disregarded, but the

choice of the person who was to fill the vacant See, belonged principally to the Metropolitan of the province, to his Suffragans, and to the Clergy of the diocese for which a Chief Pastor was to be appointed.

An anxious solicitude for the welfare of his people, oftentimes induced a Bishop, in former ages, as well as at present, to select himself the pastor, to whom, after his own decease, his flock should be entrusted.* But, though in many cases, such a proceeding originated in zeal for the interest of religion, yet it was possible, that, in other instances, a Bishop might be influenced in the choice of his successor by a less exalted principle. To guard against an evil, from which, were it to prevail, the most injurious effects could not fail to arise, the Canons of the Irish Church wisely ordained, that the Bishop should not have the right of selecting his own successor. When a See became vacant by a Bishop's death, then only, the discipline of the Irish Church determined, should good men proceed to elect a proper person to supply the vacancy.† From this rule, however, a partial deviation was occasionally permitted. If, at an advanced period of his life, when the infirmities of old age were pressing upon him, the Diocesan wished for an assistant to aid him in the discharge of his Episcopal functions, he was allowed to select and consecrate a coadjutor who was approved of by the

* Thus, in his history, Venerable Bede, states, that "Augustine was succeeded in the episcopacy by Laurence, whom Augustine had ordained, lest on his decease, the state of the Church, as yet unfinished, should totter, even for a little space of time, for the want of a pastor. In this he followed the example of the first shepherd, I mean that of Peter, the Chief of the Apostles, who having founded at Rome the Church of Christ, is related to have ordained Clement, at once his coadjutor in the preaching of the Gospel, and his successor." —*Bede*, L. 2, c. 4. For other similar instances, Vid. Clinch on Church Government, p. 473.

† Synodus ait; Nullus Episcopus successorem in vita sua faciat, sed post obitum ejus boni bonum eligant.—*D'Achery*, L. 1, cap. 17.

clergy and the people under his jurisdiction.* Thus, while the general discipline of the Irish Church prevented the interference of any unworthy motive in the transmission of the Chief Pastoral dignity, it provided, in a suitable manner, for the relief of those Prelates, who being worn out in the service of the sanctuary, were no longer equal to the laborious duties of their station.

The first associates of Palladius and of St. Patrick in the Irish mission, belonged, like these two Prelates, to that class of ecclesiasticks, who are at present distinguished by the name of the Secular Clergy. At the early period, when the Irish mission was undertaken, the usage of combining together the distinct avocations of the clerical and monastick state had not been introduced.† Sometimes, indeed, the superior talents or piety of a member of the monastick institute induced the Bishop, in whose diocese a monk possessed of these qualifications resided, to advance him to the Priesthood. But, in this case, the monk was withdrawn from the solitude of the cloister, and ordered to apply himself exclusively to the duties of the Christian ministry. In other instances also, when for example, the wants of a religious community made it necessary, that a clergyman should permanently reside in a monastery, one of the brethren was chosen, and promoted to holy orders.‡

The piety of Eusebius, who, towards the close of the fourth

* Item Synodus definivit episcopum ordinare successorem in exitu vitæ, consensu synodi et regionis ipsius sententia, ne irritum fiat.—*D'Achery, Ibid.*

† Alia monachorum est causa, alia clericorum : clerici pascunt oves, ego pascor.—*Hieronym.* Ep. 1. ad *Heliodor.*

‡ Si un Clerc se faisoit Moine, il cessoit de servir l'Eglise en public; et si un Moine etoit fait Clerc, on le tiroit du Monastere et en l'obligeoit a venir servir l'Eglise. Toutefois on permit bientôt aux Moines d'avoir entre eux quelques Pretres et quelques Clercs pour dire la messe dans leurs oratoires, et les dispenser de venir aux Eglises publiques.—*Fleury Instit. Au Droit Eccles.* Part the First, C. 25.

century, governed the See of Vercelli, suggested to him a means, by which the Secular Clergy might combine, along with the discharge of their sacred functions, the faithful practice of monastick perfection. In common with the clergy who obeyed his authority, this illustrious Bishop lived in the same house at Vercelli, and practised along with them, in the midst of the pomp and bustle of that great city, the austerity and seclusion of the cloister.* The advantages of such an institution were soon perceived and appreciated. By Saint Augustine the system of Eusebius was introduced into Africa, and followed faithfully by that illustrious Prelate, and by the clergy under his care.† In France, St. Martin, the illustrious Bishop of Tours, adopted the same institute, and trained to the observance of this admirable discipline every candidate, who aspired to the honour of the Christian ministry. St. Patrick, while preparing at Tours to undertake the conversion of the Irish people, had learned the nature and excellence of the plan, which the piety of Eusebius had first devised. In Ireland, after that country had been converted to the Gospel, the introduction of an institute, which had been approved of by some of the most distinguished Prelates of the Christian Church, was an object of the utmost importance. This institute, while it afforded to such of the clergy, as could comply with its regulations, the most precious spiritual advantages, served also as a seminary, where the young ecclesiasticks of Ireland were formed to habits of virtue, and instructed in the science requisite for the

* Hæc enim primus in Occidentis partibus diversa inter se Eusebius sanctæ memoriæ conjunxit, ut et in civitate positus instituta monachorum teneret, et Ecclesiam regeret jejunii sobrietate.—*St. Ambros.* Ep. 82, ad *Eccl. Vercel.*

† Quod ipsum præstantissimum vitæ genus Sanctus Martinus Turonensis transvexit in Gallias et Sanctus Augustinus in Africam.—*Baronius*, ad. an. 328, num. 22.

Christian Priesthood. It is not, therefore, surprising, that we should be able to trace the erection, in Ireland, of such establishments, as St. Martin had founded in Gaul, to the earliest period of our ecclesiastical history.

For the youth who aspired to the service of the sanctuary, it was not, however, enough, to have passed through the probation, prescribed in the institutions of which we have been treating. It was, moreover, deemed necessary, that his reputation should be free from reproach, at the period when he entered any of these establishments, in order to prepare himself for the sacred ministry; and to be assured, that time had given consistency to his virtue, and had effectually corrected the inconstancy of youth, the candidate for the Priesthood was not ordained till he had reached the thirtieth year of his age.

That the honour of the sanctuary might be unsullied, it was especially required, that the aspirant to holy orders should have been born in lawful wedlock. The child who was the offspring of unrestrained passion, the canons of the Irish Church pronounced to be unfit for the service of the altar.—One exception indeed was admitted, in order to encourage those who had unhappily yielded to passion, to engage in lawful wedlock, and repair the scandal, which their previous conduct might have occasioned. If before the birth of a child followed from their unlawful intercourse, the parents were united together in matrimony, the discipline of the Church then removed the impediment, and permitted him, if in other respects he were found worthy, to enter into the ecclesiastical state.

The disorders occasioned, by admitting to holy orders persons not destined for the service of any particular Church, have been frequently a subject of just complaint, with those who felt an interest in the welfare of religion. Against

this evil, from which so many unhappy consequences have followed, the chief pastors of the Irish Church endeavoured to secure the national sanctuary. By an express canon, which is ascribed to the earliest ages of Christianity in Ireland, a Bishop was forbidden to confer orders on any person whose services were not required in the diocese, subject to his jurisdiction.* To this regulation, the Bishop was bound to attend, when the aspirant to the sanctuary belonged to his diocese. But if there were question of a candidate, who was under the jurisdiction of another prelate, the Bishop was not allowed then, to proceed with his ordination, until the person to be promoted had first produced commendatory letters from his own ordinary.†

In the first ages of the Church, the Bishop, assisted by his clergy, celebrated in the assemblies of the faithful the solemn offices prescribed by the Christian ritual. On each returning Sabbath, the people under his pastoral care thronged to the Episcopal Church, to join together in the sacred duty of publick worship.‡ For those who resided at a distance from the Episcopal Church, this system must have been attended with considerable inconvenience.

* In the twelfth century, the abuse of conferring orders without a title, was, according to Fleury, very prevalent. "Mais dans le douzieme siecle on so relacha de cette regle, en multipliant extremement le clercs; parce que les particuliers cherchoient a jouir des privileges de la clericature, et les Evesques a etendre leur jurisdiction.—*Eccles. Instit. au Droit*, tom 1, part 1. The synod held at Dublin in 1186, accordingly provided against this abuse, by renewing one of the most ancient canons of the Irish Church. "Clericus vagus non sit in plebe."—*Third canon of the synod of Patrick, Auxelius, and Isserninus.*

† Synod held at Dublin, under Archbishop Cummin, A. D. 1186. This enactment is little else than a revival of the thirtieth canon of the Synod of Patrick, Auxilius and Isserninus.

‡ Una in principe diœceseos civitate erat Ecclesia, ad quam christiani omnes non modo urbis, sed etiam vicinorum oppidorum die solis, hoc est dominico confluebant .... Huic Ecclesiæ, quæ cathedralis erat ipse præerat Episcopus.—*Divoti. Instit. Juris Canon*, Vol. 1, Sect. 10.

To remedy the evil, certain Priests were delegated by the Bishop to supply his place in the remote districts of his diocese. The Priests thus deputed were subject to be recalled at the pleasure of their superior, to assist in the Episcopal Church, or if the Bishop thought proper, to be employed in other parts of the see confided to his care.* At length, the usage began to prevail, of entrusting permanently to the clergyman, who were deputed in the manner above described, the charge of the congregations, the care of which, at first, had been only temporarily assigned to them. Still, however, they continued to a certain extent dependent on the Bishop, and were always responsible to him for the religious fulfilment of the trust, which he had confided to them. It was even incumbent on the Bishop, to visit from time to time the churches which he had placed under their care, and diligently inquire how they discharged the weighty obligations which they had undertaken. The districts in which clergymen were thus distributed for the celebration of divine worship, were in course of time known by the name of Parishes, and the ecclesiasticks who were placed over them obtained the appellation of Parish Priests.

In fixing the polity of the Irish Church, the plan of entrusting each congregation to the care of a particular Pastor who resided in the same district with his flock, was that which St. Patrick followed. That such was the course adopted by him appears, both from the account which we have of his own mission, and from the ancient canons of the Irish Church. In the history of the Saint's progress through

* Verum hi Presbyteri non erant perpetui Rectores harum Ecclesiarum, cum Episcopus eas modo uni, modo alteri committeret ex clericis Ecclesiæ cathedralis, eorumque officium finiretur tempore quod ab illo constituebatur.—*Divoti.* Ibid, No. 88.

the kingdom, we find mention often made of the Priests, whom the holy man left after him in those districts, where he had preached with success, to minister to the spiritual wants of the faithful.

In every place, in which this arrangement was effected, the first care of each Pastor was employed in the erection of a temple, where his people might meet together for the celebration of the divine worship. Before, however, the edifice was set apart for this sacred purpose, the canons of the Irish Church admonished the Priest, under whose care it had been constructed, that the benediction of the Bishop should first render the building a temple worthy of the Most High.*

But while the founders of the Irish Church were solicitous to provide for the due sanctification of the temple to be devoted to the publick worship, they were still more anxious to guard the honour of the sanctuary, and to preserve immaculate the purity of the national priesthood. No vice, they were deeply sensible, could more unfit the Christian minister for the useful discharge of his sacred functions, than an unworthy attachment to worldly wealth. The holy character, with which the minister of the Altar was invested, obliged him to be ever ready to listen with compassion to the sorrows of his people. He was bound by the most sacred engagements, to be the solace of the afflicted, and to watch with parental care over the widow and the orphan. If the heart of the priest were hardened by an inordinate affection for base lucre, it was impossible, that he could discharge with advantage to religion, the sacred obligations of his ministry. To cut off every opportunity for indulging in a passion so destructive of the kindly feelings, that are congenial to the

* Si quis presbyterorum ecclesiam ædificaverit, non offerat antequam adducat suum Pontificem, ut eam consecret, quia sic decet.—*Canon the twenty-third. Synod of St. Patrick, Auxilius and Isserninus.*

Christian Priesthood, the clergyman was ordered to return to the Church whatever superfluous riches,* the piety of his flock might have bestowed upon him. From the contributions of the faithful he was indeed permitted to take what was required for his own decent support. But whatever was not necessary for this legitimate purpose, the discipline of the Irish Church enjoined him to preserve with religious fidelity in the treasury of the sanctuary, that it might be employed for the service of the altar, or for the relief of the indigent. If, unmindful of the obligation which the canons imposed upon him, the clergyman presumed to divert from the prescribed purpose the offerings of the faithful, and appropriate them to the gratification of his own pride or sensuality, he was deemed unworthy of his sacred office, and ordered to be removed from the pastoral dignity.†

But charity for the poor formed only one of the duties which the clergyman was bound faithfully to discharge. It was, he was moreover reminded, of the utmost consequence to the welfare of religion, that in every other respect also, his example should edify those who daily witnessed his conduct. To be present at publick games, or amusements, was incompatible with the edification which he owed to his people, and would be calculated to encourage them in the pursuit of dissipating and oftentimes dangerous enjoyments. The discipline of the Irish Church therefore wisely forbad her ministers to be present at these festivities.‡

* Synodus decrevit ut sacerdos omne quod superfluum habet det in Ecclesia, et ut quantum Ecclesiæ dimiserit tantum Ecclesia demat de superfluis ejus.—*Ap. D'Achery*, L. 2. Cap. 20.

† Si quis vero Clericus contravenerit, et dona invadere deprehensus fuerit ut turpis lucri cupidus ab Ecclesia sequestretur.—*Canon* 26. *Synod St. Patrick Auxil. Issernin.*

‡ Omnis Clericus, qui ludum spectare desiderat, degradetur.—*Ap. D'Achery*, from L. 39, Cap. 14.

Neither should the time of the Priest, which was consecrated to the most holy occupations, be wasted unprofitably in places set apart for traffick, or for the transaction of secular business. If, indeed, it were necessary, that he should be present on a particular occasion in a place of this description, he was permitted to attend there, but it was enjoined him, to retire into the privacy that befitted his holy character, as soon as he had transacted the business which brought him thither.*

During his abode on earth, the Redeemer deigned occasionally to honour with his presence the table of those, who wished him to partake of their hospitality. The opportunity which this intercourse afforded him, the Saviour was accustomed to employ, in instructing the ignorance, and in informing the piety of the persons, with whom he then conversed. The connection, in which the office of the Priest united him with the people under his spiritual care, obliged him to be sometimes present at their private and social entertainments. From associating with his flock on certain festive occasions, the canons of the Irish Church did not prohibit the secular clergy. But, if they allowed the Priest to participate in such an indulgence, they also reminded him, that like his Divine Master, he should be careful to edify those who were the spectators of his conduct, as well by his temperance, as by the serene and amiable gravity of his deportment. The voice of the Priest, the canons declared, was consecrated to the celebration of the praises of the Most High. To withdraw it from so holy a destination, and amid the dissipation of the festive board, to employ it in the levity of profane song, was, there-

* Clericus, qui non pro emendo aliquid in nundinis vel in foro deambulat, ab officio suo degradetur. *Martene*, from Lib. 9.

fore, the canons of the Irish Church declared, deserving of severe reproof. But, if unhappily, the Clergyman should, by a much more criminal deviation from his duty, forget the sacred character with which he was invested, and scandalize his associates by profane swearing, his conduct was then pronounced to merit the most rigorous punishment, and he was ordered to be cut off from the communion of the faithful.*

The doctrine and the example of the Divine Legislator of the new dispensation, taught his first disciples, to hold the virtue of celibacy in the highest esteem. A Virgin, the early Fathers remarked, had been chosen before all others, to enjoy the Divine maternity: a Virgin precursor had been elected to announce the glad tidings of approaching redemption, and a Virgin Apostle was fixed on by the expiring Saviour, to be the guardian of a Virgin Mother. In his intercourse with his Apostles, the Redeemer, having observed, that, to secure the kingdom of heaven, there were some, who had undertaken the obligation of celibacy, concluded his discourse, with an exhortation, in which he encouraged them to the practice of that virtue.† Instructed in the doctrine of the Gospel by the revelation of Jesus Christ, the Apostle St. Paul proclaimed to the faithful at Corinth, the paramount advantage that belongs to the state of holy chastity. While the married man was, according to St. Paul, solicitous for the things of this world, the unmarried person, on the contrary, was concerned only for

* Clericus inter epulas cantans, fidem non ædificans, sed auribus tantum pruriens excommunis sit. Clericus jurans excommunicandus est.—*Martene*, Ibid.

† His disciples say unto him: If the case of a man with his wife be so, it is not expedient to marry. Who said to them: All men take not this word, but they to whom it is given. For there are eunuchs, who were born so from their mother's womb: and there are eunuchs, who were made so by men: and there are eunuchs, who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven. He that can take it let him take it.—*St. Matt.* v. 10. 11. 12.

those things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God.*

The lesson contained in these inspired maxims, induced many of the first Christians to renounce sensual pleasure, and devote themselves to the perfect practice of a virtue which the Gospel so highly commends. But if, with regard to others, the state of continency were, in a spiritual point of view, so desirable, on the minister of the Christian sanctuary, it was meet, that the obligation of embracing it should be imperative. The sublime nature of the character, with which the Priest was honoured, demanded, that the exalted functions of his calling should be performed by a minister, whose heart was pure and unsullied by any gross or earthly attachment. At first, indeed, while the wants of the rising Church made such an indulgence necessary, persons engaged in the married state, were sometimes allowed to engage in the service of the sanctuary. But the persons to whom this indulgence was conceded, were men of distinguished piety, who, after their ordination, renounced every carnal enjoyment, and practised the perfection of Evangelical purity.† When the general diffusion of the Gospel enabled the Chief Pastors of religion, to choose for the sacred ministry those only, who were free from the engagements of matrimony, and who were prepared to embrace the state of celibacy, the discipline to which the Catholic Clergy are now subject, was established in every part of the Latin Church.‡ The laws of the Emperors,

* But I would have you to be without solicitude. He that is without a wife, is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God. But he that is with a wife, is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife, and he is divided.—*First Epist. to the Corinth.* vv. 32. 33.

† Illius est solius offerre Deo sacrificium qui indesinenti et perpetuæ se denoverit castitati.—*Orig. Homil.* 23, in Numeros.

‡ Ita placuit et condecet sacrosanctos antistites et Dei sacerdotes, nec non et levitas, vel qui sacramentis divinis inserviunt continentes esse in omnibus, quo

when these had embraced the faith, confirmed the obligation which the Canons had previously enjoined on the Clergy, and to the spiritual censures inflicted on the Priest, who violated his engagement to observe chastity, superadded various civil disqualifications. By the enactments of the Emperors, the offending Clergyman was deprived of the privileges, which the State had annexed to the clerical order, and his children were branded with the stigma of illegitimacy.* Among the Greeks, the discipline of the Western Church was gradually relaxed, till, at length, a Synod of Greek Bishops, which was held in the seventh century, permitted persons, who had engaged in the marriage state, to aspire to the honour of the Christian Priesthood. But while the Prelates who composed this assembly relaxed a law of so much importance to the welfare of religion, they were careful to accompany the concession with restrictions, that attest the high esteem in which the state of celibacy was held by the Greek Church. According to the new discipline, which was enacted on this occasion, matrimony did not, indeed, exclude the person who had engaged in its obligations from the dignity of the Christian Priesthood. But from advancing to the higher offices of the sanctuary, the married ecclesiastick was prohibited. For those alone, who had solemnly devoted themselves to the perpetual practice of chastity, the honour of the Episcopacy was exclusively reserved.

Every monument of Irish Ecclesiastical History proves,

possint simpliciter quod a Deo postulant impetrare; ut quod Apostoli docuerunt et ipsa servavit antiquitas nos quoque custodiamus—Ab universis episcopis dictum est: omnibus placet ut episcopi, presbyteri, diaconi, et qui sacramenta contrectant, pudicitæ custodes, etiam se ab uxoribus contineant.—*Concil. Carthag. Secund.* Can. 3.

* Ne legitimos quidem et proprios esse eos, qui ex hujusmodi constupratione nascuntur, aut nati sunt.—*Leg.* 45, *de Epis. et Cler.*

that the discipline, which enjoined on the Priesthood the practice of celibacy, was introduced along with Christianity into Ireland. If in our ancient annals any expressions occur, which would seem to imply, that this discipline was ever relaxed, the explicit testimony, which the same annals elsewhere supply, demonstrates, that if any dispensation in the observance of celibacy was allowed to its ministers by the Irish Church, such indulgence was granted to those clerks only, who discharged the inferior duties of the sanctuary. For, with regard to those of her ministers, who were advanced to holy orders, so great was the care which the Irish Church employed, to guard the purity of their character even from the danger of suspicion, that it was forbidden to them to frequent the society of females, who were not connected with them by relationship. To domesticate with himself a female, not joined to him by the relationship of mother or sister, of aunt or of niece, was strictly prohibited to a Priest, by the discipline of the Irish Church.* Had it been permitted to the Irish Clergy, to engage in the obligations of matrimony, the Canons which imposed these restraints would have been useless and unmeaning enactments.

The discipline of the Irish Church, respecting the celibacy of her Clergy, may be learned, not only from the Canons which she enacted, but also from the history of many of her most distinguished children, whose zeal induced them to leave their native land, in order to promote the cause of religion in other countries. From the monuments of piety which these illustrious members of our ancient church have left behind them, I shall select the Penitential, compiled in the seventh

* Clerici frequentandi extraneas mulieres non habeant potestatem, sed cum matre, vel thia filia, sorore, nepte, tantum vivant, de quibus omnibus nefas est aliquid quam natura constituit suspicari.—*Martene*, from Lib. 9. The words "thia filia," when joined together, mean an unmarried aunt.—*Lan.* Vol. 4, p. 389.

century, by St. Columban. In the twentieth Canon of his Penitential, Columban determines the penance, which a clerk shall undergo, who, after he had received holy orders, dared cohabit with the wife, whom, previously to his ordination, he had married. The crime of such a clergyman, St. Columban pronounces to be not less atrocious, than that of the person, who after having served from his youth in the sanctuary, would sacrilegiously presume to commit the sin of fornication.* The language of the learned Cummian, who lived about the same time as Columban, entirely accords with that of his distinguished contemporary. If the unhappy man, who had forgotten the sacred obligation which he contracted on entering into the sanctuary, should, after his transgression, refuse to submit to the penance which his offence was justly deemed to deserve, Cummian ordained, that the sentence of excommunication should be pronounced against the delinquent, and that he should be wholly cut off from the society of the faithful.†

The illustrious men, whose names have been now recited, were educated in the bosom of the Irish Church, and must have been intimately acquainted with its disci-

* Si quis autem clericus, aut diaconus alicujus gradus, qui laicus fuit in seculo cum filiis et filiabus, post conversionem suam iterum suam cognoverit clientelam et filium iterum de ea genuerit, sciat se adulterium perpetrasse et non minus peccasse quam si ab juventute sua clericus fuisset, et cum puella aliena peccaset, quia post votum suum peccavit, postquam se Domino consecravit, et votum suum irritum fecit; idcirco similiter septem annis in pane et aqua pœniteat.—*Liber St. Columbani. De pœnitentiarum mensur. taxanda*, Cap. Bibl. Patr. Tom. 12, p. 21. In the Missal of the same saint, which was found at Bobbio, the following Canon occurs:—Si quis clericus vel superior gradus, qui uxorem habuit, et post honorem iterum eam cognoverit, sciat se adulterium commisisse.

† Si clericus aut monachus postquam se Deo voverit, ad secularem habitum reversus fuerit, aut uxorem duxerit, decem annis pœniteat . . . . . et nunquam postea in conjugio copulotur. Quod si noluerit, sancta synodus, vel sédes apostolica separavit eos a communione et Convocationibus Catholicorum.—*Cummian's Penitential*, cap. 3.

pline. Had any discrepancy on the subject of clerical celibacy existed between the Irish Church, and the churches where these holy men passed the latter part of their lives, some vestiges of it would, doubtless, be found in the writings which thay have left us.

Of the devotedness with which Columbanus adhered to every point of discipline, which the Irish Church sanctioned, even in matters less connected with morality, than the discipline of Clerical Celibacy, his conduct on the Paschal Controversy affords a sufficient illustration. Were the discipline of the foreign churches, with which this saint was connected, different from that, which was followed in Ireland, on the matter under consideration, the Saint would, it cannot be questioned, have as sternly vindicated the usage of Irish Christianity on this point, as on the controversy regarding Easter. The fidelity of the Irish Clergy, in complying with the obligation of celibacy, was acknowledged at the period of the English invasion, even by those, who rebuked them with unsparing severity, for other defects, with which they were not justly chargeable. "The Clergy of this country," —these are the words of a writer not liable to be suspected of partiality to Ireland—"are very commendable for religion, and among the divers virtues, which distinguish them, excel and are pre-eminent in the practice of chastity."* If, after the English invasion, instances of individual delinquency occurred, these were caused in a great measure, by the vicious example of the Clergy who accompanied the invaders to Ireland.

* Girald. Cambrens.

CHAPTER V.

Irish Clergy—Revenues provided for their maintenance—Canons of the Irish Church on the administration of their revenues—Tithes—Contributions levied on ecclesiastical possessions by the State, and by private persons—Termon Lands—Peter Pence.

THE obligation of contributing to support the ministers of the altar has been recognised in every age, by the professors of natural, as well as of revealed religion. Before the introduction of the Mosaic dispensation, sacred history represents the Father of the faithful, as distributing with generous piety, to Melchisedech, the Priest of the Most High God, the tenth of those spoils, which Abraham had received from his vanquished enemies. When the Jewish law was established, its Divine Author was careful to provide for the decent maintenance of the ministers whom he ordered to be set apart for the service of his sanctuary. According to the economy of the ancient covenant, the tribe of Levi was not to have any participation, in the division which was made of the promised land among the Jewish people. By the divine ordinance the members of the Levitical tribe were to be dispersed among their brethren throughout Judea, that by their presence, they might at once repress superstition, and promote the legitimate worship of the true God. In return for these services, the law ordained in behalf of this portion of the Jewish people,

that a tenth of his profits should be paid by each Israelite, for the maintenance of the ministers of religion. Besides his proportion in this revenue, the Priest, on whom it devolved to offer up sacrifice, was permitted to make use of part of the victim, which he immolated in sacrifice. One case only was excepted.* If the sacrifice which he offered were a holocaust, the victim was to be then entirely consumed by fire, and no part of the oblation was to be appropriated to the Priest. The sacrifice of holocaust was offered, as a publick and solemn acknowledgment, of the supreme dominion of the Almighty over creation. It was fitting, therefore, that the rite to be observed in its oblation, should adequately expres the sublime truth, to announce which the holocaustic sacrifice was ordained. When the priesthood of Aaron gave way to the Pontiff of the New and Eternal Testament, the law, by which the ministers of the Jewish sanctuary were maintained, ceased to be obligatory. The obligation indeed of affording a competent support to the ministers of religion, the Christian dispensation declared to be yet in force. But the mode, in which this duty was to be complied with, not being particularly determined by the Gospel, was left to the conscientious discretion of those who embraced the Christian doctrine.

While the profession of Christianity was deemed a crime deserving the vengeance of the civil law, the temporal condition of its ministers could not have been, at least generally, very prosperous. But, after the conversion of the Emperors, when the terror of persecution had subsided, the faithful indulged their piety in contributing liberally to the grandeur of the publick worship, and to the maintenance of the ministers of religion. On some occasions, nor were

* By the general disposition of the Mosaic Law the Priest was allowed to participate of sin-offerings and of peace-offerings. But if he offered a victim for his own sin, or for that of all the people, he was not permitted to partake of that sacrifice.

these of rare occurrence, their generosity did not confine itself to donations of a transitory or precarious nature; but, in order that the accomplishment of the sacred purposes which they had in view, might be perpetually secured, they transferred for ever to the Church even their immoveable possessions. In many countries in which the Gospel was established, the system in use under the Jewish dispensation, for the support of the Priesthood, seemed to the rulers, to be that which was the best adapted to provide for the maintenance of the Christian ministry.

In Ireland, the usage which was introduced for the maintenance of the Clergy, appears to have been very similar to that which prevailed in the early ages of Christianity. In every part of the country, tracts of land, sometimes of great extent, were consecrated by their proprietors to the support of the officiating Clergy, or the endowment of some religious institution. At certain seasons of the year, as well as on some particular occasions also,* each Pastor received from his people, such offerings as usage, or the ecclesiastical ordinances of the Irish Church had appointed for him. With the system of tithes, the people of Ireland, at least generally, were unacquainted, until the period of the English invasion. Even after the invasion, and despite the efforts of the settlers, to promote the adoption of that system here, the payment of tithe does not appear to have been ever formally acquiesced in by the Irish nation.†

Nor should the opposition of the Irish people to this mode

* According to a fixed rule of the Irish Church, a certain part of the property of a deceased person was reserved for the Church.—*D'Achery*, L. I. c. 6. *Lanagan*, chap. 30, sect. 11. vol. 4.

† Cambrensis admits that even after some years had elapsed since the English settled in Ireland, the Irish people continued to disregard the enactments that were made to enforce the payment of tithes.

of supporting the Clergy appear suprising. The first pastors of the Irish Church were men, who fully understood the injurious consequences, of which the inordinate wealth of the Clergy could not fail to be productive. Against these evils, they had, from an early period, taken the most salutary and effective precautions.

To arrange the contribution, which the people of each district should give to their Pastor, in such a manner, as would make their offerings to be exactly adequate to the Clergyman's decent support, was obviously impracticable. The generosity of his flock might, in many instances, supply a plentiful income to a Priest, whose appointed dues would supply only a scanty competency. The canons of Irish discipline therefore ordained, that the superfluous riches of the Priest, should be returned by him to the particular church, in the service of which these revenues had been received.* From the fund, which was thus established, the expenses necessary for the decency of publick worship, for the repairs of the church, and for the wants of the poor, were to be deducted.

But while the solicitude of the holy men, who enacted the discipline which regulated the primitive church of Ireland, guarded the inferior Clergy against the danger of worldly wealth, it did not neglect to adopt a similar precaution with regard to those, who discharged the more exalted duties of the Hierarchy. In virtue of ancient usage, it was customary, that whenever the Bishop visited the churches subject to his authority, certain offerings should be presented to him.† These offerings, if they were neces-

* Synodus decrevit, ut sacerdos omne, quod superfluum habet, det in Ecclesia, et ut quantum Ecclesiæ dimiserit, tantum Ecclesia demat de superfluis ejus.—*Ap. D'Achery*, L. 2, c. 20.

† Besides the dues to which every Bishop was entitled, the Primate received certain offerings from every part of the kingdom, according to the regulations of

sary for his decent support, the Bishop might appropriate to that purpose. But if his other revenues were sufficient for his maintenance, the canons then enjoined him to distribute these offerings among the indigent.* Nor were these disciplinary enactments left without the sanction necessary to enforce their observance. The ecclesiastick who was found to have violated these solemn ordinances, the same canons reproved as a person whose heart was taken up with the love of filthy lucre, and ordered, that he should be cut off from the communion of the Church.†

But the discipline of the Irish Church interfered not only to check the indulgence of avarice in the clergy, but it imposed, moreover, a judicious restraint on the pious liberality of the faithful. In the fervour of his last moments, and when preparing to appear before his Creator, the dying Christian might desire to render himself acceptable to his Creator, by consecrating his earthly goods to the service of religion. Such a disposition of his property might, in some instances, interfere with his obligations towards those, with whom the ties of relationship had connected him. To guard against this inconvenience, the canons of the Irish Church ordained, that the claims of the sons, the brothers, or the other near relations of the deceased, should not be prejudiced by the enactments of a last testament.‡

what was termed the law of St. Patrick. In the year 835, the Primate collected these oblations in Connaught, and in 1106 the same tribute was paid by the people of Munster.

* Si quæ a religiosis hominibus donata fuerint diebus illus, quibus pontifex in singulis habitaverit ecclesiis, pontificalia dona, sicut mos antiquus, ordinare, ad episcopum pertinebunt, sive ad usum necessarium, sive egentibus distribuendum, prout ipse episcopus moderabit.—*Canon the twenty-fifth of Patrick, Auxilius, &c.*

† Si quis vero Clericus contravenerit, et dona invadere fuerit deprehensus, ut turpis lucri cupidus ab Ecclesia sequestretur.—*Can.* 26, *Ibid.*

‡ Nullum oportet fraudare filios aut fratres aut propinquos. Item ecclesia nonnisi partem Dei accipit; cum enim heres mundi venerit, retrahet ea quæ mundi sunt.— *D'Achery*, from L. 4. cap. 6.

But if the chief Pastors of the Irish Church refused to profit of a liberality, which could not be exercised without prejudice to the legitimate claims of others, they were, on the other hand, careful to require, that the dying Christian should set apart for religious purposes such a proportion of his property, as was suitable to his rank in society, and was compatible with his duty towards those with whom relationship connected him. From the regulation, which we find to have been made on this matter, by the Synod held at Cashel, in 1172, we may infer, what proportion each person was expected to devote, at the hour of death, to charitable purposes. According to the canon enacted at the Synod of Cashel,* every Christian, when visited with any dangerous infirmity, was required to execute his will with due solemnity, in the presence of his Confessor, and of other witnesses, who were to be called in from the neighbourhood of the sick man's abode. The testator was then required, to declare before all those who had assembled to witness the proceeding, the amount of moveable property of which he stood possessed. From this property, his lawful debts, and the wages of his servants, were, in the first place, to be deducted. These preliminary arrangements being completed, the remaining portion of his moveables, the testator distributed into three parts. The first part was set aside for his children, and the second part for his wife.

The funeral expenses, and the prescribed contributions to religious purposes, were to be discharged from the remaining

* Sexto quod universi fideles in infirmitate positi confessore suo et vicinis astantibus, cum debita solemnitate testamentum condant, bona sua mobilia, dummodo uxores et liberos habeant (ære alieno et servientium mercede exceptis) in tres partes dividant, unam liberis, alteram uxori legitimæ, tertiam propriis exequiis relinquentes. Et si forte prolem legitimam non habuerint, bona ipsa inter ipsum et uxorem in duo media dividantur. Et si legitima uxor decesserit, inter liberos ipsum et bipartiri debent.

portion. Should it happen, that the testator left no children after him, or that his wife had departed from life before him, the arrangement to be then followed was regulated by the same principles, by which that just now described was directed.

In Ireland, as well as in other countries, the lands which the piety of the faithful had consecrated to the service of religion, were exempted from many of the civil obligations, to which the possessions of lay proprietors were subject. To encumber with civil burdens, property, devoted to so sacred a purpose, was deemed injurious to those important spiritual interests, which it is the duty of a Christian community to cherish and protect. The revenues of the Church were employed in the support of men, whose lives were spent in administering the comforts of religion to persons of every rank and condition of society. Nor was it to be apprehended, that if these revenues were more than sufficient for the wants of the Clergy, the interests of the civil community would be thereby prejudiced. His superfluous riches, the Priest was bound to restore to the Church, in order that they might be employed in a way highly advantageous to the State. The canons, which the Priest was solemnly bound to obey, enjoined him, to devote whatever portion of his income remained, after his own decent support was provided for, to the service of the church and the relief of the poor. In proportion as a fund thus constituted increased, the burden of supporting the indigent was proportionably lightened on the civil community. The persons, moreover, to whom, by this wise arrangement, the care of the poor was principally transferred, were men of education and of piety, whose station and character obliged them to discharge with attention and kindness the important trust confided to them.

But though the possessions of the Church were relieved from certain obligations, to which lay property was liable, they were subject to others, which proved occasionally of an annoying and oppressive nature. To have their lands free from "tribute, from chief rents, and from other publick contributions," was of little consequence to the C rgy, if they were, notwithstanding, still liable to be oppressed by the exactions, either of the Lord, by whose ancestors these lands had been set apart for religion, or of the Chief under whose immediate jurisdiction a Clergyman happened to live.

In Ireland, as well as in other countries, the Clergy were oftentimes aggrieved, not only by excessive exactions, but also by the personal services which were required from them. To the latter kind of obligation they were particularly adverse, because by it, they were often engaged in pursuits, altogether foreign from their sacred and peaceful avocations. In their wars with one another, or with an invading enemy, the Irish Princes claimed, and sometimes exercised the right, of calling on their clergy to accompany them to the field of battle. At length, towards the close of the ninth century, the wisdom of Aidus, who then swayed the supreme sceptre of Ireland, abandoned a prerogative, which, while of little value to the Crown, was in the highest degree oppressive to the Clergy.

At the time here referred to, some political dissension had engaged Aidus in hostilities with the people of Leinster. Not satisfied with having ravaged the country of his enemies, Aidus resolved to humble them by still greater inflictions. To gratify his vengeance, it was necessary to exercise his prerogative to the fullest extent, and collect together all his subjects who were able to carry arms, that by the number of his forces, he might strike terror into his

ene mies. The Clergy being therefore summoned to attend his standard, the Primate Connach, and a numerous body of Ecclesiasticks attended in obedience to the Royal mandate. As soon as the army arrived on the frontiers of Leinster, the Clergy represented to the King the hardship of exacting military service of them, and prayed to be exempted from it. Aidus referred their petition to the Primate, and promised to follow the decision which that Prelate should pronounce. The Monarch could not have adopted a course more grateful to the Clergy, or more likely to secure for them the favour they desired. But it behoved Connach to take care, that his judgment should not be open to the charge of an undue partiality in favour of the order to which he belonged. With becoming wisdom, therefore, the Primate drew up a statement, in which he demonstrated the incompatibility of military service, with those duties, to which alone the Clergy should be devoted. Aidus acknowledged the cogency of the arguments, which the Primate advanced in support of his brethren, and immediately granted the Clergy permission to return home.

Besides the military service, which previously to the reign of Aidus, the Clergy owed the Chieftain or Prince under whose immediate authority they lived, there were also contributions of another kind exacted from them. The weak and defenceless condition in which the unsettled state of society formerly left the Clergy, induced them oftentimes, to court the patronage of the Chief in whose vicinity they resided. This patronage, we may presume, was occasionally extended to the Clergy, solely from a motive of religion, and without the hope of any temporal remuneration. But the concession of this gratuitous indulgence, in course of time, became unfrequent, and, at length, the usage became

general, that in return for the Chieftain's services, a certain tribute should be paid to him, out of the ecclesiastical property which was placed under his protection. To this remuneration, the Chieftain had a specious title, at least in those cases, in which he exercised his patronage in favour of the Clergy, from whom he received such a contribution. But, there were other cases, where without having any such plea to justify their demands, the avarice of the Irish Nobles enforced similar exactions from the Clergy who resided in their neighbourhood. In course of time, these demands, subjected the members of the Ecclesiastical order in Ireland to many unjust and oppressive grievances. At the period of the English invasion, they formed a topic of general complaint among the Irish Clergy.

The policy of Henry made him anxious to evince such a solicitude for the interests of the Church, as might be likely to gain over the Clergy to favour his pretensions. The grievances now recited afforded him a propitious opportunity of interfering for their redress, in such a way, as would be likely to secure the important advantage, which he had in view. His great object in coming to Ireland, Henry professed, was, to reform the vices of the natives, and to restore religion among them to a state of primitive purity. In the case under consideration, he might happily both advance his pretensions and give plausibility to his affected zeal for the spiritual welfare of the Irish people. By the directions of Henry, a Synod was, therefore, convened at Cashel, in which, among other matters, the contributions exacted from the Clergy by certain lay persons, were brought under consideration.

At this Synod, a Canon was enacted, by which ecclesiastical lands and property of every description were

exempted from the tributes, that had been so much complained of by the Clergy.*

But, besides the contributions in money, which were levied on the various kinds of ecclesiastical possessions in Ireland, there was another obligation oftentimes imposed on the religious institutions, that were erected throughout the country. This obligation, while in a temporal point of view, it proved exceedingly oppressive, must have also seriously interfered with the quiet and privacy of the cloister. Under various titles, which, if sometimes just, were as often void of right, and sustained only by the power of those who preferred them, certain Princes and Noblemen claimed for themselves and their retainers, the privilege of being entertained and supported, at the expense of the religious institutions in their vicinity, whensoever they thought fit to visit these establishments. To this grievance, the attention of the Synod held at Cashel was also directed. To remedy so great an abuse, the Council issued a prohibition, forbidding the Irish Princes and Nobles, and also the Sons and relations of these personages, to claim henceforward the right of entertainment from those who resided on ecclesiastical property.† The Synod concluded its enactments on this subject by ordaining, that the tax, which had been hitherto paid at stated times in the year, to the Prince who resided in the neighbourhood of a religious establishment, should, for the future, be wholly abolished.

* In quarto, quod omnes terræ ecclesiasticæ et earum possessiones ab omnium secularium hominum exactione penitus sint immunes.—*Cambrensis Hib. exp.* c. 34. *Wilkins Concil, M. B.* Vol. 1, p. 472.

† Et specialiter, quod nec reguli, nec comites, nec aliqui potentes viri Hiberniæ, nec eorum filii cum familiis suis cibaria et hospitalitates in territoriis ecclesiasticis, secundum consuetudinem, exigant, nec amodo violenter extorquere præsumant; et quod de villis ecclesiarum cibus ille detestabilis, qui quater in anno a vicinis comitibus exigitur, de cætero nullatenus exigatur.—*Ibid.*

But the policy of Henry was not satisfied with exempting the Clergy from those burdens, under which they had just cause to be uneasy. He was, moreover, resolved to adopt such further enactments in their favour, as would entitle him to be looked upon as the patron and generous benefactor of their order.

Before his arrival in Ireland, the system of paying tithes for the support of the Clergy does not appear to have been adopted in Ireland. That country had now, in a great measure, lost its independence, and was to be henceforward governed by an English Sovereign. It was meet, therefore, that the Irish Clergy should be provided for, as respectably as their brethren in England were. By another decree, passed on the same occasion at Cashel, it was accordingly resolved, that the faithful of each parish should pay to their pastor the tithe of animals, of corn, and of other produce.* In a few years after this enactment had been made at Cashel, another Synod was convened in Dublin, and a still more liberal concession made to the Clergy, in order to reconcile them to the pretensions of the English Sovereign. By the decree which the Council at Cashel had sanctioned, the tithe of animals and of corn had alone been expressly appropriated to the Church. Besides the tithe of animals and of corn, the Synod of Cashel had, indeed, declared, that the Pastor was to receive "the tithe of other produce also." But what the things were to which the words "other produce" applied, the Synod had not determined. This obscurity, the Council held at Dublin proposed to remove, and it accordingly declared, that tithes should be paid to the Mother Churches, "of provisions, of hay, of the young of animals, of flax, of wool, of gardens,

* Tertio, quod universi fideles Christi decimas animalium, frugum, cæterarumque proventionum, ecclesiæ, cujus fuerunt parochiani, persolvant.—*Ibid.*

of orchards, and in fine, of whatsoever things grow and are renewed annually."

Such an interpretation of the law of tithe, gave but too much reason to those who adopted it, to apprehend, that a strong sanction indeed would be required, in order to render the regulation effectual. Before the Council closed its deliberations, various penalties were, therefore, decreed against such persons, as should refuse obedience to the ordinances, which had been proposed regarding the payment of tithes. According to the provisions devised for the enforcement of the new system, the man who neglected to pay tithes to his Pastor, was, in the first instance, to be admonished of his fault. If this caution were unheeded, the Pastor, before he proceeded further, was directed to admonish his parishioner a second time. A third time, the same proceeding was to be complied with, in order that the delinquent might have sufficient leisure for reflection and amendment. But if the third admonition were disregarded, then the contumacy of the defaulter was to be visited with the severest spiritual chastisement, and he was ordered to be excluded from the society of the faithful. Should these means prove ineffectual in reclaiming him, other measures were then to be resorted to, to compel him to submit to the prescribed obligation.

The policy of Henry contributed, notwithstanding, but little, to advance either his own interests, or those of the Clergy. The aversion of the people to the new impost, was augmented by the reflection, that the tithe system owed its origination,* in Ireland chiefly to the influence of a Prince, whom they regarded as the enemy of their national indepen-

* At the Council of Kells, A. D. 1152, Cardinal Paparo ordered, in virtue of apostolic authority, that tithes should be paid: but, it is certain, that his order was not attended to.—*Lanigan*, vol. 4, c. 7.

dence. On the clergy, the effect of Henry's generosity was, in a great degree, counteracted by the animosities, which broke out between them and the English ecclesiasticks who followed the invaders to Ireland.

Of the English Clergy, who then settled in this country, there were many, whose lives were a reproach to their sacred calling. These we are assured, had scarcely taken up their abode in Ireland, when several of them were found to live in the violation of the solemn obligations, which are annexed to the Priesthood. That, under the pretence of introducing a more strict morality into Ireland, the country should have been made tributary to England, was of itself sufficiently mortifying to the Irish Clergy. But, that such spiritual instructers, as had been imported by the invaders, should be employed to enlighten the piety of the Irish people, provoked their utmost indignation.

At the Synod which was convened in Dublin in the year 1185, Albin O'Mulloy, Abbot of Baltinglass, publickly denounced the English Clergy who had settled in Ireland, as guilty of having corrupted by their depraved example the purity of the Irish priesthood. Nor was the accusation preferred by the abbot, one which had its origin in the violence of political excitement. The Arch-Bishop Cummin, an Englishman whom Henry had raised to the See of Dublin, judged it necessary, to investigate the charge which had been made against his countrymen. The result of the inquiry was, that many of the accused were convicted of the crimes imputed to them, and were in consequence suspended from their sacred functions and from the enjoyment of their benefices.*

* Le second jour Aubin, abbé de Banquinglass, fit un long sermon sur la con-

But besides the prejudice which was excited against the invaders, by the immorality of the ecclesiasticks whom Henry sent over to reform the manners, and improve the piety of the people and Clergy of Ireland, there was another circumstance, which created a hostility to the pretensions of the English Sovereign, which the superior force of his arms alone could subdue. Remote as the Clergy and people of Ireland were from the contests, which in those times had so often occurred between Popes and Kings on the limits of their respective authority, they, notwithstanding, appear to have been always deeply impressed with the conviction, that to the Roman Pontiff, obedience in spiritual matters only was due. The pretensions put forward by some of the Popes, to temporal dominion over them, the Irish people sometimes indeed passed by with becoming silence. But no document can be adduced to show, that they ever recognised in the Roman Pontiff the right to exercise any temporal dominion over them. During the pontificate of Gregory the Seventh, that Pope, in a letter which he addressed to Turlogh, who then swayed the Irish sceptre, advanced the same pretensions to temporal power, which, in his intercourse with other Sovereigns, he so frequently insisted upon. Yet, neither on this occasion, nor on any other, do we find any tribute remitted to Rome, or any act performed, which would imply, that the Sovereign of Ireland regarded his temporal authority as dependent on that of the Roman Pontiff. On the contrary, even after many years had elapsed, since the invaders had

tinence des clercs, où il rejetta sur les etrangers la corruption qui s'étoit introduite a cet égard c'est-à-dire sur les ecclesiastiques venus de Galles et d'Angleterre, montrant quelle etoit auparavant la purité du Clergé d'Irlande . . . . . L'Archevesque . . . prononca aussitôt sa sentence contre ceux qui en étoient convaincus : et les suspendit des fonctions ecclesiatiques et de la jouissance de leurs benefices.—Fleury Hist. Eccles. L. 74. Sect. 8.

first landed in Ireland, the Irish people addressed a letter to a successor of Pope Gregory, in which they openly asserted the entire temporal independence of their Sovereign, and denounced the proceedings of Adrian with regard to Ireland, as a flagrant violation of order and of justice.* Such having been the opinion of the Clergy and people of Ireland respecting the power of the Pope over the temporal rights of their Sovereign, the generosity with which Henry affected to act towards the Irish Church, must have appeared to them, not as the result of piety or liberality, but as an effect of the same crafty policy, by which his conduct had been directed, from the period when he first projected the invasion of that country. In truth, so far as relates to the tithe system, by the introduction of which, he hoped to reccommend himself to the Irish Clergy, the edicts relating to that system, which were issued under the sanction of his authority, are acknowledged even by Giraldus Cambrensis to have proved entirely unavailing.† The

* In the year 1316, Donald O'Neill, Prince of Ulster, and several Chieftains, addressed a letter to Pope John the Twenty-third, against the tyranny and cruelties of the English. In this letter they state, that from the conversion of Ireland by Saint Patrick, and their coming under the spiritual obedience of the Roman Church, until the year 1170, they had sixty-one kings, who acknowledged no superior in temporals, "nullum in temporalibus recognoscentes superiorum." They say that Adrian acted unjustly without any respect for law or justice, "indebite ordine juris omisso omnino." Hence, it is plain, that they had no idea whatsoever of any former grant made of Ireland to Urban the Second, or to any Pope.—Lan. Vol. 4. p. 163. The letter of O'Neill, and that which the Pope addressed in consequence of it to Edward the Second of England, are subjoined in the Appendix. Doctor Lanigan remarks, p. 274, vol. 4, that in the old Irish Synods, he has not met with any assumption of power by the Clergy with regard to political or civil matters. A remarkable instance of the respective exercise of authority on the part of Church and State, occurred in the Council of Mellifont, A. D. 1157. O'Melaghlin, prince of Meath, was condemned in this council: but the clergy went no further than to excommunicate him, whereas the decree by which he was deprived of his principality, emanated from Murtogh O'Loghlin, King of Ireland, and the other princes then present.

† Giraldus, speaking of a period many years subsequent to that when this Synod of Cashel was held, says that tithes were not then paid by the Irish people.

utmost benefit which his interference for the Clergy effected, was the suppression or diminution of those exactions, which the Princes and Nobles of Ireland had been previously accustomed to extort from the Church.

These exactions, it has been stated, were not unfrequently exorbitant and oppressive. But there was another abuse of a yet more serious nature, which the interference of the Laity with the possessions of the Church gave rise to in Ireland. Under the names of Comorbans and of Erenachs, Lay persons, or inferior clerks, had in many parts of the country obtained possession of considerable tracts of land, which had been originally consecrated to the service of religion. In one part alone of the kingdom, in Armagh, the temporal possessions of that see were usurped for a period of two hundred years, by such persons as those whom we have now described. The influence of these persons became at length so powerful, that, notwithstanding that they had engaged in the marriage state, and were not initiated in Holy orders, they assumed the appellation of Archbishops of Armagh.*

This enormous evil, the zeal of Celsus at length succeeded in correcting. Celsus by descent was entitled to the property, which his ancestors had unjustly alienated from the sacred purposes for which it had been originally destined. From his early youth, he had manifested an inclination to engage in the service of the sanctuary. As

* St. Bernard Vit. S. Malach. cap. 7. al. 10. This latter flagrant abuse appears to have commenced about the eleventh century, and to have been continued till the beginning of the twelfth. For, Dubdalethe the second, who governed the see of Armagh in the latter part of the tenth century, had received episcopal consecration, and St. Celsus became Archbishop in the year 1105. Colgan says (Tr. Th. p. 302) that these Lay persons claimed a right to the see as if an advowson of their family, and Dr. Lanigan (vol. 3. p. 382) adds, that they retained regular Bishops to act for them as suffragans, while they themselves enjoyed the church livings.

soon as he had attained sufficient maturity, Celsus, in accordance with the desire which he had long cherished, was initiated in holy orders. His virtues and superior attainments soon attracted the notice of his brethren in the sacred ministry, and obtained for him their suffrages, when they assembled to elect a person to fill the Primatial see of Armagh. Subsequently to the appointment of Celsus, St. Malachy exerted his zeal in reforming the abuses of the Irish Church, and particularly those which prevailed in the See over which the principal Metropolitan of Ireland presided. The exertions of St. Malachy were zealously supported by Celsus, and at length, by the labours of these two illustrious Bishops, an end was put to the iniquitous system, which had so long prevailed in the chief Archiepiscopal See of the kingdom.

The injury done to the Church of Ireland, by those who assumed the titles of Comorbans and Erenachs, was of longer continuance, than that of which we have been just now treating. The individuals designated by the names of Comorban and Erenach, appear to have been persons, who were originally entrusted with the administration of the temporalities of the Irish Sees, in order that the Bishops, being freed from all anxiety on worldly concerns, might devote themselves entirely to the discharge of their Episcopal duties. In progress of time, those who were at first merely the administrators, became by various artifices, the proprietors, in some cases, of all, in others, of a considerable portion of the property, that had been confided to their care. Indeed, the system, which the Bishops, at least in many instances, adopted, enabled the agents of whom we speak, to indulge oftentimes their avarice with impunity. For, instead of exacting from time to time an accurate return from these administrators, of the pos-

sessions entrusted to them, and of the revenues that accrued from such property, the Bishops, that they might be wholly exempt from secular concerns, received a certain annual allowance, and left all that remained, as a compensation to their agents for the care of administration. Thus, in a short time, the extent, boundaries, and titles to the ecclesiastical property of many dioceses must have been involved in considerable perplexity, and an easy means was afforded to the administrators of such possessions, to commit with security the greatest injustice. The abuse which we have now described had not its origin in Ireland, and was not peculiar to the church established in that country. It prevailed also in England, in France, and in other kingdoms, and was eventually suppressed only by the most vigorous exertions of the principal pastors in these places. According to the ancient discipline of the Church, the management of ecclesiastical property was consigned by the Bishop of each diocess to a clergyman distinguished by the appellation of Archdeacon. In course of time, the place of this functionary was supplied by a lay person, who, though not attached to the ecclesiastical state of life, retained, in virtue of his office, the title of his predecessor. This innovation in the ancient mode of administering the property of the Church, was soon followed by various abuses.

To remedy the evil, various regulations were adopted by the Pastors of those churches in which it prevailed. Among these regulations, there was one which ordained, that the Bishop should select his Archdeacon, from among the Clergy under his own jurisdiction, and not leave to persons unconnected with the sanctuary, the dispensation of the revenues of the Church. Whatever effect this ordinance may have had in reforming, in other countries, the abuses of which

there is here question, it does not seem to have been introduced into this kingdom. For, until a comparatively recent period, lay persons, under the name of Erenachs, continued to be appointed here, to manage the temporalities of the Irish Church. The evil consequences of this system were, it is likely, aggravated in Ireland, by the peculiar manner in which the Erenachs were chosen there. For the privilege of electing a person to fill the office of Erenach, belonged to each of the Septs, which inhabited the diocess, where an administrator for the temporalities of the Church was to be appointed.

According to the rules by which the election was regulated, the choice of the Septs was to be exercised only in favour of one of their own number. Thus by means of faction, of intrigue, or of avarice, it was easy to appoint to the office of Erenach, a person wholly unfit for the faithful discharge of the trust to be confided to him. In one case alone, does the Bishop appear to have had the right of interfering in the selection of his administrator. If a difference arose among the electors, which prevented them from deciding unanimously in favour of a particular person, the Bishop and his Clergy might then interpose, and choose from the same class one, who was qualified to fill the vacant office. In progress of time, it must have occasionally happened, that the Sept, in which the power of electing an Erenach resided, became extinct. To provide against this contingency, it was arranged, that another Sept should be substituted in place of that which was now extinct. The regulations which the newly chosen Sept followed, differed in no respect from those, which regulated the proceedings of their predecessors.

The rules regarding Corbes or Comorbans were very similar to the laws by which the Erenachs were chosen.

In point of wealth and respectability, the Comorbans, indeed, appear to have been usually persons of a higher station than the Erenachs. The Comorbans, besides the importance which they derived from their extensive possessions, had sometimes this additional claim to respect, that they were initiated in holy orders. The Erenachs, on the other hand, if they were in any manner attached to the ecclesiastical state of life, were not, it is probable, advanced beyond the rank of inferior clerks. According to the stipulation, to which the Erenach subscribed, at the time of his appointment to that office, he was bound to contribute, from the ecclesiastical property entrusted to him, a third part, for the support of the Bishop whose temporalities he administered. The remaining portion of the Bishop's revenue, the Erenach, after he had deducted what was requisite for his own maintenance, was ordered to employ in the repairs of the Church, in the exercise of hospitality, and in the relief of the poor. The nature of the Erenach's office, and the duties that were annexed to it, are thus described by a writer, whose situation afforded him an opportunity of being informed on these subjects.* The Erenach was bound "to make a weekly commemoration of the founder in the Church; this officer had always the first tonsure, (primam tonsuram,) but he took no other orders. He had a voice in the Chapter, when they consulted about their revenues, and paid a certain yearly rent to the Bishop, besides a fine upon the marriage of each of his daughters, which they call a loughinipy; he gave a subsidy to the Bishop, at his first entrance into his Bishoprick; the certainty of all which duties appears in the Bishop's register; and these duties grew unto the Bishop first because the Erenach could not

* Sir John Davie's Letter to the Earl of Salisbury, in Collectan. vol. 1.

be created, nor the Church dedicated without the co
of the Bishop.

Of the possessions set apart in Ireland for religious
poses, there were some which were distinguished by the
of "Termon Lands." These lands were exempted from
tain civil taxes and contributions, to which the lands o
proprietors were subject. It hence became necessary t
the boundaries of these privileged possessions by the an
tion of some peculiar sign. From the circumstance, tha
boundaries of these lands were thus distinguished, the ap
tion "Termon," formed from the Latin word "Termi
was given to property of this description. The sign empl
in Ireland to distinguish the possessions we here speak of,
that of the cross.* This sacred sign, it was strictly pro
ed to disturb or injure. To secure it from irreverence,
care was taken to solemnize its erection in each dis
where the Termon lands were situated, by the celebrati
religious rites. When the ceremony of its erection was
performed, due notice was given to the several persons
were expected to honour the solemnity with their pres
From the accounts which remain of the celebration of
rite, it appears, that the King, the Bishop, and the peop
the district where the cross was to be erected, were a
tomed to assist at the solemnity,† and that they all
certain offices assigned to them respectively in the perf
ance of this sacred ceremony.

But though this solemnity was principally designed fo
benefit of the Church, in order that the possessions set
for religious purposes might not be enroached upon by

* Terminus sancti loci habeat signa circa se. Synodus dicit; ubicumc
veneritis signum Crucis Christi, ne laeseritis.—*Ap. D'Achery*, from
cap. 11.

† Tres personæ consecrant terminum loci sancti; Rex, Episcopus, popu
D'Achery, Ibid.

avarice of lay proprietors, yet it was not devoid of advantage to the civil community. If, on the one hand, it secured ecclesiastical property from unjust exactions, it, on the other, pointed out to the collectors of the imposts due to the Crown, the territories from which these revenues were to be raised, and prevented the person to whom the administration of the Church lands was confided, from encroaching on the premises that adjoined to the ecclesiastical territory. Hence, the Sovereign, in attending on the occasion, when a cross was to be erected on any part of the Termon lands, discharged not only a religious, but also a civil duty of great importance to the community under his care. This duty was of the greater moment, because to these lands, the right of sanctuary, appears to have been, in some instances, at least, annexed. Such a privilege being one, which must have emanated from the temporal Sovereign, it was meet, that his approbation should be obtained, before so important an immunity should be conceded.

It was under the plea of advancing the interests of religion in Ireland, that Pope Adrian undertook to transfer the sceptre of that kingdom to a British Sovereign. Besides the obligation of endeavouring to reform the abuses, which were then imputed to the Irish Church, Henry, moreover, promised to maintain inviolably the rights and privileges, which that church enjoyed at the period of the invasion.* To these engagements, there was another appended, which Henry also undertook, in the hope, that he would thus facilitate the accomplishment of his political views with regard to Ireland. The engagement here referred to, relates to the promise of Henry to remit annually to Rome, a certain tribute, known in

* This condition was enjoined in these words by the Bull of Pope Adrian, "Jure niminum ecclesiarum illibato et integro permanente."

those times by the name of "Peter's Pence."* The origin of this tribute is ascribed to the devotion, which Offa, King of Mercia, entertained towards St. Peter, the Prince of the Apostles. Under the influence of religious feeling, Offa bound himself by the solemnity of an oath, in presence of the Papal Legate, to remit, each returning year, a fixed sum to the Church, which the successor of St. Peter governed. The money thus contributed was destined for the relief of the poor, and for supplying lights during the celebration of divine service in the Church. In progress of time, the successors of Offa were enabled to transfer from themselves to their subjects, the burden which that prince had voluntarily undertaken. To raise the appointed sum, a tax of a silver penny was annually levied on every holding of a certain value, and the sum thus collected was carefully transmitted to Rome.

To secure the exact payment of this tribute, a particular season of the year was fixed for the collection of it, and a penalty imposed on those who neglected to comply with the demand. The system prescribed for the collection of the Peter Pence in Ireland, was entirely modelled after that which had been previously established in England. As soon, however, as Henry had obtained footing in Ireland, he found that his temporal interests in that kingdom depended much more on the good will of the Irish Clergy towards him, than on the power of the Roman Pontiff. These, he therefore endeavoured to conciliate, by the most liberal concessions in favour of their order, while his promises to Adrian respecting the Peter Pence appears to have been wholly forgotten by him. The exaction of this tribute he

* "Et salva Beato Petro et sacrosanctæ Romanæ ecclesiæ de singulis domibus annua unius denarii pensione."—*Ibid.*

never attempted to enforce on Irish subjects.* Nor did the people of Ireland entertain such kindly feelings towards Adrian, as would induce them voluntarily to undertake the payment of a tax, which they regarded as the reward of that Pontiff's injustice, in sanctioning the invasion of their country by a foreign usurper.

* In the account of the synod of Cashel which has been given by Giraldus Cambrensis, there is no mention made of any decree having been enacted to secure the payment of the Peter Pence. The other records of Henry's proceedings in Ireland are also silent on this subject.

CHAPTER VI.

Origin of the Monastick institute—Introduction of Monachism into Ireland—St. Columbkill—His history—His birth, eductaion, &c. &c.—Monasteries established by him in Ireland and in the Island of Hy—Canons Regular of St. Austin and Cistercian Monks established in Ireland by St. Malachy —St. Columbanus—His rule—St. Brigid—Order of Nuns founded by her—Her history, &c. &c.

In adjusting the moral code of the New Dispensation, its Divine Legislator laid down certain sublime maxims, which he recommended to the attention of his more fervent followers. The beneficial influence of that admirable economy, which, besides enforcing the precepts of the Gospel, encouraged moreover the professors of Christianity to aspire to the perfection of the Evangelical counsels, is attested in every page of Ecclesiastical history. From the condition in which society has existed at every period since its origin, it is obvious, that the great majority of mankind will be always engaged in the various avocations of civil life. Honourable and useful as those avocations are, it is, however, an admitted truth, that by occasion of them, the human heart is sometimes seduced, its affections withdrawn from spiritual and eternal goods, and transferred to created and unworthy objects. Hence, by the greater part even of those

who believe the Gospel, the solemn injunction of the Apostle, "to use the things of this world, as though they used them not," is oftentimes forgotten; and a restless spirit of cupidity acquires a fatal ascendancy over them.

To correct this propensity to terrene attachments, the Redeemer was careful, to impress on his disciples the special benediction which awaited those, who voluntarily renounced all earthly pursuits, that they might be wholly devoted to the service of their Creator. That, but a comparatively small number of his followers would "receive this word," which bade them aspire to an almost Angelic sanctity, the Saviour clearly foresaw. Yet, small as the number of these persons might be, their edifying example would unceasingly admonish their brethren who continued engaged in the dissipation of secular pursuits, that the happiness of a Christian was not to be sought for, in the indulgence of sensuality or ambition. In effect, if example be the argument, which speaks most powerfully to the human heart, it is manifest, that the conduct of those, who, to serve God alone, renounce the tenderest endearments of private life, and the most flattering prospects of worldly ambition, must exert a strong and wholesome influence on every department of Christian society.

In the infancy of the Gospel, its professors without exception aspired to much of that perfection, which the degeneracy of succeeding ages has deemed to belong exclusively to the cloister. From the history of the primitive Church, as that history is traced in the inspired writings, we learn, that the first converts to the Gospel generously renounced their temporal possessions, and lived in common with their less opulent brethren. Unhappily, however, this spirit of disinterestedness and indifference to worldly wealth was not of long continuance. As soon as the virtue of the cross had triumphed

over the fury of the first persecutors, and when that sacred ensign, instead of being a reproach, began on the contrary, to shed a new lustre even on the diadem of the Cæsars, numbers assembled under the standard of Christianity, who were strangers to the spirit which the Gospel inculcates. To shun the contagion of their degenerate brethren, many Christians withdrew into retirement, resolved to cultivate in solitude that perfection, from which they feared, lest the influence of example might seduce them. At a period, even more remote than that, when the conversion of the Emperor Constantine was effected, the high reputation of St. Pachomius for superior sanctity attracted to his retreat in the deserts of Upper Egypt numerous disciples, who were eager to learn under this holy teacher the lessons of Christian perfection.* After the model of the religious communities which were first founded in the solitude of Thebais, other sodalities were gradually introduced into the several countries, where Christianity prevailed.

In the history of the Western Church, the names of many distinguished individuals are recorded, whose piety drew around them multitudes of disciples, who hoped to attain under their guidance the practice of exalted virtue. The maxims, which had been adopted by Anthony and Pachomius, the first great models of the ascetick life, were carefully rehearsed by every succeeding teacher of Evangelical perfection. But though the maxims of these holy men formed the basis of the system, by which the several religious fraternities that first grew up were regu-

* Nullae tamen coaluerant societates hominum, qui suam ad certas regulas vitam conformarent, et nullum conditum erat Cœnobium, sed pauci tantum, et singulares homines huc illuc in desertis Ægypti dispersi vitam traducebant donec, pacata, et tranquilla Ecclesia, Pachomius quædam in Ægypti Thebaide Monasteria ædificanda curavit. *Divoti.* Vol. 1, de Monachis &c.

lated, still the head of each community claimed the power of making such enactments, as he deemed most expedient for the spiritual welfare of the persons subject to his jurisdiction.* These variations in the rules of monastick discipline related however, only to the less important observances of the cloister. In fixing the mode of employment for his religious brethren, in regulating the quality of their dress, or of their diet, in arranging the time to be devoted to the exercises of devotions, in these and such like matters, the Superior of each community exercised a power altogether discretionary. But in what regarded the practice of the distinguishing virtues of the monastick state, no candidate was received into any religious community, who was not prepared to undertake their observance.

Sometimes, indeed, the fervour of the aspirant to the sanctity of an ascetick life relaxed, and he grew weary of attending to the practices of piety, with the undeviating uniformity which the monastick rule enjoined. In this case, it was, however, one which only rarely occurred, he was permitted to retire from a state of life too arduous for his imperfect virtue, and to engage in those pursuits, to which his choice might conduct him.† It was only after the lapse of centuries, when zeal for the attainment of Christian perfection began to grow cold, that it became usual for those who engaged in the religious state, to devote themselves by solemn vows to

* Idcirco Rectorum arbitrio nova etiam in uno monasterio regula interdum recipiebatur.—*Divoti:* Ibid.

† "So that at first the monastick life seems to have been a matter of choice not only at mens first entrance, but in their progress and continuance also." Bingham's Origin. Ecclesiastic. L. 7. Sect. 22. This discipline continued, however, only for a very short time. For by the Councils of Orleans, Chalcedon and Trullo, various penalties were decreed against monks who renounced the religious state. The civil law also excluded them from ordination, condemned them to a species of servitude, and adjudged their property to the monastery which they had abandoned.—Vid. *Bingham* L. 7. †. Sect. 24.

the obligations annexed to that sacred calling. The severity of the new discipline was however accompanied by a salutary precaution. In virtue of this precaution, a candidate, before he consecrated himself to the duties of a monastick life, was required to prove the steadiness of his purpose, and the strength of his virtue, by undergoing the ordeal of a rigorous probation.* During the period appointed for this trial, the young religious was assiduously employed in the austere exercises of the state to which he desired to attach himself. His temper, his humility, his love of prayer, of purity, and of the several duties of the monastick life, were each severely scrutinized by his superior. After a stated period, when the qualifications of the candidate might be securely pronounced upon, he was, if deemed fit by the more experienced members of the community, admitted among the brotherhood. Should those, however, to whom it belonged to judge of his qualifications for the religious state, form an unfavourable judgment of him, he was then admonished to embrace a profession more suited to his imperfect virtue, and directed to withdraw from within the precincts of the monastery.

Of the extraordinary predilection which the Irish people formerly cherished for the monastic state of life, not only their own history, but even the history of almost every other European country, bears the most honourable testimony. From the early annals of the Irish Church, it would seem that the introduction of monachism into Ireland was coeval with the conversion of that country to the Gospel. Indeed the narrative of St. Patrick's history not unfrequently repre-

* Monasterium ingressi apud orientales in eo per triennium manere debebant, antequam professionem emitterent. Idem jus in occidente interdum obtinuisse constat. ex Can. un dist. 53. Interdum vero requirebatur biennium At S. Benedicti regula annum præfinivit quod probavit Synodus Tridentina. *Divoti*. Vol. 1, Titulus 9. de Monachis.

sents, as co-ordinate and simultaneous events, the conversion of his hearers to the Christian faith, and the adoption by some of the converts of the ascetick mode of life. Neither was this species of religious heroism confined exclusively to the sons of Ireland. Her daughters too emulated their countrymen in their love for the religious state, and united with them in obtaining for their native land the glorious appellation of the Island of Saints. Before the venerated Apostle of Ireland closed his splendid career, his piety was cheered by the numbers of the devout sex, who presented themselves to him, that under his direction, they might consecrate their virginity to God.

In Ireland, as in many other countries, the peculiar circumstances, in which the first converts were placed, prevented many who aspired to perfection, from uniting in communities, and practising together the exercises of the religious state. In the privacy of their own domestic dwelling, and amidst the circle of their kinsfolk, they laboured to cultivate those virtues, which the conventual mode of life is intended to promote. At the earliest period, however, of the Irish church, mention is often made of religious establishments, where, under the direction of a Superior, a number of persons were associated together, in order that they might regulate their conduct by the same rule of religious discipline. The community in which St. Patrick had prepared himself for the conversion of Ireland, seems to have been the model, after which the first religious institutions of that country were formed. Such a model was indeed obviously the best suited to the various exigencies of the Irish Church at that period. While the institutions formed after this model offered a convenient retreat, where the austere virtues of the cloister might be assiduously cultivated, they served also as seminaries for the education of the Irish youth, who were destined for the

service of the altar. St. Patrick had witnessed the important benefits which had been conferred on his native country by establishments, which united together the study of sacred literature and of Evangelical perfection. To such institutions, France was indebted for many of the most distinguished ornaments of her illustrious hierarchy. It was in similar establishments, that St. Martin the celebrated Bishop of Tours, St. Hilary, of Poictiers, and other equally conspicuous Prelates of the Church of Gaul, had acquired the virtues and the learning, that made these holy men shed such lustre on the Christian Sanctuary. The predilection of St. Patrick for an institution so productive of the most esteemed spiritual advantages, made him naturally solicitous for the introduction of a similar establishment into the country of which he had become the chosen Apostle. Under the care of the venerable Ecclesiasticks whom he had selected to assist him in the discharge of the Episcopal functions, seminaries of the same description, as those established in Gaul, were erected in various parts of Ireland.

The Irish youth were not slow to profit of the opportunities, which the enlightened zeal of their pastors opened to them. With a glowing pencil the Irish annalists pourtray the rich harvest, that rewarded the first teachers of their countrymen. From every quarter of the Island multitudes of the native youth resorted with eagerness to these retreats consecrated to the pursuits of literature and religion. Nor did the ardour which marked their opening career abate, during the term fixed for the accomplishment of the appointed course in these establishments. The same generous spirit which prompted them to enter into these institutions, incited them also to an honourable emulation in the pursuit of learning and of virtue. In their exertions to attain a proficiency in the studies that engaged their attention, they were

cheered and encouraged by the admirable example of the distinguished masters who presided over them. The character which is given in our ancient history, of the venerable men by whom the first Christian youth of Ireland were prepared for the sanctuary, shows, that these holy men were pastors, worthy of the brightest period of the Christian Church. In the memoirs which are still extant of these venerable personages, they are usually distinguished by the most honourable epithets, and, at the same time, the most expressive of the peculiar virtues, by which they had earned the veneration of their contemporaries.

Among the distinguished members of the monastick institution, at the early period of the Irish Church to which we now refer, St. Columba, or Columbkill, holds the first place. This illustrious Saint was born about the close of the year five hundred and twenty-one. According to a classification adopted by our ancient annalists, St. Columba belongs to that order of Irish Saints, which, because it includes the immediate successors of the holy men, who were the contemporaries of St. Patrick, has been denominated the second order or class of Irish Saints. But though for the reason now assigned, Columba is reckoned in the second part of the Irish Calendar, his birth and future eminence was predicted during the lifetime of St. Patrick. By his Father, Columba was descended from Niall, Prince of Tyrconnel. His mother Æthena drew her origin from an illustrious family in Leinster, which was connected with Caithir, the Supreme Monarch of Ireland.

Before the Saint's birth, a dream of a singular import admonished Æthena, that a child of her womb was to receive an extraordinary benediction from the Most High. During her sleep, an Angel bearing a robe of unequalled beauty seemed to approach her. Having presented the robe to her,

the Angel, after a short interval, deprived her of it, and spreading it forth, suffered the wind to carry it away. Disappointed and mortified by this strange proceeding, Æthena anxiously inquired, why she had been thus treated. Her interrogatory was met by the reply, that so splendid a robe could not be permitted to remain with her. While the Angel uttered these words, Æthena kept her eyes fixed steadfastly on the mantle, which was now floating in the firmanent. As the mantle ascended towards the heavens, she observed it to expand its dimensions to so great a magnitude, as at length to extend itself over the mountains, the forests, and the distant plains. The grandeur of the spectacle deepened her affliction for the loss of so splendid a costume. While she indulged her sorrow, a voice reached her ear, which consoled her in these words, "Woman, grieve not, for you shall bring into the world a Son, who will be the guide of innumerable souls, and will be reckoned as one of the prophets of the Most High."

The early part of his youth, Columba passed under the care of the venerable priest, by whom he had been regenerated in the waters of baptism. Even at that period of life, the tenor of his conduct showed, how deeply his mind was impressed with the solemn truths of religion. From his very childhood, his biographer, Adamnan, informs us, "Columba was devoted to those exercises of Christian piety which befitted his tender years, and with a holy solicitude, he preserved a spotless purity of mind and body, showing by the superior sanctity of his manners, that, though dwelling on earth, he was already ripe for heaven. But it was not only by the edifying life, which the young Columba led, that the special predilection of Heaven in his regard was made manifest. It moreover pleased the Creator, to display, by the exercise of Almighty power, the

extraordinary favour, with which this holy youth was cherished by him. One of these manifestations of the Divine omnipotence is stated to have occurred, during the infancy of the Saint, and while he was yet under the direction of the Priest, to whom the care of his early youth was confided. It happened, on the occasion here referred to, that Cruthenan, so the guardian of Columba was named, required to leave his house in order to discharge his sacred functions. Returning home, as soon as his duty had been complied with, a strange and admirable spectacle presented itself before him. As he approached his place of abode, he beheld his house illuminated with a pure and serene light. His attention was next directed to his pupil Columba. Over the head of the holy youth, a luminous globe of fire, from which there issued forth a clear and steady radiance, appeared as if suspended in the air. Filled with astonishment, the venerable man prostrated himself on the earth, admiring in profound silence this expressive indication of the spiritual light, with which the soul of the favoured child under his care was illumined by Heaven.

The time had now arrived, when it became necessary, to direct the attention of Columba to those studies, with which the candidate for the Christian ministry requires to be well acquainted. To afford him an opportunity of cultivating those studies with advantage, Columba was transferred from the house of his teacher, Cruthenan, to the school at Moville, over which St. Finnian presided. Finnian had obtained among his countrymen a high reputation for learning and sanctity. In the early part of his life, he had had the good fortune to be placed under the care of Colman and of Cælan, two ecclesiasticks, of whom honourable mention is made in the ancient annals of Ireland. By the advice of Cælan, Finnian passed over into Britain, in order to profit

of the lectures, which were delivered at the Seminary, founded by Nennius at Whitethorn. Having spent some time at that institution, Finnian returned home, and began to impart to the youth of his own vicinity those lessons, which he himself had been hitherto studying. The fame of the new teacher soon reached the remote quarters of the Island, and drew to his school numbers of the youth, who aspired to the service of the altar. In this school, Columba devoted several years to the study of sacred letters. His proficiency in learning and in virtue justified the anticipations, which his early youth suggested.

It was during his abode in the monastery of St. Finnian, that Columba was admitted to the holy order of Deaconship. While officiating in that capacity, his ministry was honoured in an extraordinary manner by Heaven. It happened, that, on a certain occasion, when the Bishop of the Diocess where the monastery was situated wished to offer up the Eucharistic Sacrifice, wine could not be procured, and the celebration of the sacred rite was therefore delayed. During the interruption, which was thus occasioned, Columba went to a neighbouring fountain, in order to procure water for the service of the altar. As soon as he had filled the vessel, which he had brought with him to the fountain, the holy Deacon invoked that Divine Being, who, at the marriage feast of Cana, changed water into wine, and prayed, that the greatness of the Saviour's name might be now also manifested. The prayer of the Saint was favourably received, and the liquid element again felt the power of the Divinity. Columba, then addressing the assembled Clergy, exclaimed, "Here is wine, which the Lord Jesus has sent for the celebration of his Mysteries."

The period having at length arrived, when Columba was to take his departure from the Seminary of Moville, his

desire to become yet more perfect in ecclesiastical virtue and learning, induced him to profit of the instructions of a Master, by name Germanus, who had recently come from a foreign country to Ireland, and had acquired here an exalted reputation. The same special providence, which had hitherto watched over and illustrated the opening career of Columba, continued still to manifest solicitude for the Saint. While residing with Germanus, an event occurred, which convinced his new preceptor, that Columba was a cherished object of Heaven's predilection. It happened, that Germanus and Columba were, on a certain occasion, reading together in a field, which was situated in the vicinity of their usual abode. While they were thus engaged, they were surprised by the sudden approach of a female, who ran to implore protection from them. The unhappy woman had scarcely reached the place where they stood together, when she was overtaken by her pursuer. Regardless of their presence, the savage assailant rushed upon his victim, and murdered her before them. In the instant, when this sanguinary deed was committed, Columba warned the inhuman perpetrator, that the Divine wrath would quickly overtake him, and avenge by his sudden death the blood of the innocent person, whom he had murdered. But a short interval elapsed, until the unhappy end of the criminal showed, that the prediction was dictated by Him, to whom the past and the future are alike known.

Columba had now attained the twenty-fifth year of his age, and he began to think, that he should not defer any longer to accomplish his resolution, of labouring to promote among his countrymen the interests of religion. Guided by the example of the holy men who had preceded him, he saw that the great object which he had in view would be best attained, by multiplying in Ireland those

holy institutions, in which the perfection of Christian virtue was at once taught and practised. By diffusing such establishments over the kingdom, the benefit of the edifying example of their members would be every where felt, and a strong incentive be thus happily administered to the national piety.

Columba was, however, anxious, to employ, in the first instance, his exertions, in favour of the inhabitants of that part of the Island where he was born, and where the princely house to which he belonged still maintained its sway. Returning therefore to Tyrconnel, he solicited and obtained from his friends a convenient site for a monastery, with a portion of the adjoining land. The monastery was erected on a gentle eminence, which was adorned with a rich grove of majestic oaks. From this peculiar circumstance, its name, Doire Calgaich, is said to have been derived. As soon as the internal economy of the new institution was satisfactorily arranged, Columba prepared to visit other parts of the country, in order to extend to them the benefits which he had secured for his native place. Dairmagh, now Durrough, was the territory to which he next directed his steps. Here, too, his efforts were blessed with the most cheering success. In a short time, the piety of the Saint was gratified, at beholding erected in this vicinity another of the institutions, from which he expected, that so much benefit would be derived by his countrymen.

The object of Columba's visit to Durrough being now happily accomplished, and the period being at hand, when he was to be promoted to the Priesthood, the Saint undertook a journey to Meath, in order to receive the sacred right of ordination from Etchen, a Bishop, who resided in that territory. Etchen was descended from an illustrious family

at Leinster. But this Prelate had a much stronger title than any which the lustre of ancestry can confer, on the veneration of his countrymen. Notwithstanding his noble birth, his mode of life was distinguished for a simplicity, which showed that he was a worthy successor of the Apostles. Emulating the example of these first founders of the Christian Church, Etchen was distinguished among his brethren for the practice of the like exalted virtues. When Columba reached the habitation of this Apostolick man, he found the Bishop at the plough, discharging the humble duties of a husbandman. With that kindness and affection which religion alone inspires, the holy Prelate welcomed the arrival of Columba. Columba having communicated to Etchen the object of his present visit, the Bishop cheerfully consented to impart the power of the Priesthood to a candidate so deserving of that honour.

By some of our ancient writers, it has been asserted, that Etchen received instructions in the commendatory letters which Columba brought from some of the Irish Bishops, to promote the Saint not only to the Priesthood, but also to the Episcopal dignity. It happened, however, through some inadvertence on the part of Etchen, that he gave only Priest's orders to Columba, and did not perform the peculiar right prescribed for the consecration of a Bishop. When apprized of the mistake, Etchen urged Columba, to permit him to supply the rite, which he had unintentionally omitted. Columba, on the other hand, conceiving, that the occurrence which had taken place was directed by the Divine Providence, could not be prevailed upon to acquiesce in the request, and formed the resolution, which he ever after observed, of remaining for life in the subordinate rank of Priest.

After his ordination, Columba returned to the monas-

tery of Durrough. But he remained there, on this occasion, only for a short time. Before he departed from Durrough, the Saint deemed it necessary, that he should justify some measures which he had adopted, and which were disapproved of by several of the neighbouring Prelates. The measures here referred to, became a subject of inquiry at a Synod, which was held in Geisille, a place not far distant from the monastery of Durrough. The impression made in the Synod, by the report of these measures which the Bishops had received, was so unfavourable to Columba, that the Council came to the resolution of visiting the author of them with ecclesiastical censure. At the moment, however, when this resolution had been taken, Columba arrived. Brendan, Abbot of Birr, an ecclesiastick of high character and of great influence, rose to salute the Saint, and welcome his arrival. Surprised at the conduct of Brendan, some of the Bishops expostulated with him, on the impropriety of showing such a mark of attention to a person, whom the Synod had censured. "Had you seen," replied the Abbot, "what the Lord has been pleased to manifest to me to-day concerning this elect of his, whom you are dishonouring, you would not have passed that sentence, whereas, the Lord does not in any manner excommunicate him in virtue of your wrong sentence, but rather exalts him more and more." The reply of the holy Abbot surprised the Synod, and each person anxiously inquired, in what way God had made known his approbation of Columba's conduct. Brendan then informed them, "that he saw a luminous pillar advancing before the man of God, while the Saint was on his way to the Council, and holy Angels also accompanying him through the plain. I dare not, therefore, continued Brendan, treat with disrespect, a man, whom I see pre-ordained by God, to be the guide of

nations to eternal life." This extraordinary announcement confirmed by a witness whose sanctity was acknowledged by every one present, induced the Council to reconsider the proceedings, which they had adopted against Columba. The result was most favourable to the Saint. Without further delay, the sentence of excommunication was reversed, and each person present emulated his brethren in treating Columba with the respect due to a person, whom God so highly honoured.

After his departure from Durrough, Columba employed his zeal in erecting in different parts of the kingdom institutions similar to those which he had already established. The happy results which attended his exertions were indeed consoling to his piety. But the feuds, by which the peace of his own kinsfolk were disturbed, interfered with the accomplishment of the ulterior designs which the zeal of this holy man meditated. So long as he could cherish the hope, that his influence would conduce to terminate the hostilities, that were carried on between the Chieftains of his family, the Saint was willing to labour for the restoration of peace. But, when the continual renewal of contests, which he thought had been composed by his decisions, admonished him, that his efforts were unavailing, he resolved to depart from Ireland, and thus cut off an occasion, that could not fail to mar his exertions in the cause of religion.

The northern parts of Britain presented, at this time, many attractions, to induce the Saint to select that region, as the theatre of his future labours. Among the northern Picts, the light of the Gospel had not yet appeared. The Scots, a neighbouring Colony from Ireland, professed, indeed, the Christian worship. But among these Colonists, the sacred fire of religion had almost lost its splendour, and it required

a watchful guardian to arouse its slumbering embers into activity, and elicit its salutary and vivifying influence. The prospect of rescuing one portion of his fellow creatures from the darkness of Paganism, and of reviving among another, connected with him by the endearing ties of kindred and country, the piety which distinguished their common ancestry, afforded the purest pleasure to the mind of Columba. His delight was heightened by the hope he entertained, that he might be able to diffuse in this region also, religious institutions, like those which he had established in his native country.

In the vicinity of that part of Caledonia, where Columba intended to exert his zeal, a cluster of Islands is situated, which is known, at the present time, by the appellation of the Hebrides. These Islands, or at least some of them, appear to have been then subject to the Prince, who ruled over the Scottish colony, which had settled in Caledonia. The sequestered situation of these islands admirably adapted them for the seclusion, enjoined by the rules of the monastick life. In a retreat, such as they afforded, Columba felt assured, that the followers of his institute might devote themselves without interruption to the holy exercises of prayer and meditation. His connexion with Conall, the Sovereign of the Scottish colony, for Conall, like Columba, was lineally descended from the Dalradian dynasty, gave the Saint reason to hope, that he might easily obtain leave to introduce his institution into one of these Islands. Conall did not disappoint the expectations of his kinsman. The smallest of these Islands, then known by the name of Hy, and distinguished at the present day by the appellation of Icolmkill, was generously granted by the Monarch to Columba, for the use of the Saint and of his religious brethren. Thither, therefore, the holy man, accompanied by twelve

disciples, set sail from Ireland. The weather fortunately proved propitious, and the Saint, with his companions, after a prosperous voyage, landed safely in the Island of Hy. After their arrival, their first care was employed in erecting a monastery and a church. A period of nearly two years appear to have been devoted to the completion of this undertaking, and to the settlement of the code of discipline by which the new establishment was to be regulated.

As soon as the arrangements regarding the institution were concluded, Columba resumed his former purpose of preaching the Gospel to the Northern Picts. The people then distinguished by this name, occupied all that part of modern Scotland, which lies northward of the Grampian mountains. No missionary, at the period here spoken of, had announced in that inhospitable clime the doctrine of redemption. The formidable barrier, by which this people were separated from their Southern neighbours, had hitherto prevented the tidings of salvation from being wafted to their place of abode. At length, undismayed by the difficulties to be apprehended, in the conversion of a nation, which had scarcely emerged from barbarism, Columba, attended by a few disciples, opened his Apostolick mission amongst the Picts.

The news of Columba's arrival soon reached the ears of Brude, the Monarch who then swayed the Sceptre in these parts. Shut up within the walls of the royal residence, which was situated near Inverness, Brude hoped to remain undisturbed by the zeal of the missionary. Fearful, however, lest the solicitude of Columba for his conversion should prove superior to this precaution, he gave orders, that if the Saint approached, the gates of the Palace should be closed against him. The apprehensions of the Prince were soon justified by the event. Anxious to obtain the sanction

of Brude for his undertaking, Columba proceeded, in the first instance, to the Royal abode, that he might announce the tidings of salvation to the King.

On his arrival, the Saint found, that every avenue by which he could approach the person of the Monarch was cautiously secured, and that all access to him was thus rendered impracticable. Undisturbed by this unexpected difficulty, the Missionary called to mind the omnipotence of that Great Being, who promised, that the faith of his followers would suffice, to lift up mountains from their foundations, and cast them into the depths of the sea. With full confidence in the Saviour's promise, Columba advanced fearlessly to the gate, which was barred against him, and impressed upon it the Sacred Sign of the Cross. Obedient to the power of him, with whose holy ensign it was now sealed, the closed portals yielded without delay, and flew open in the presence of the astonished by-standers. In a moment after, the Missionary was admitted to the Royal presence. The King, confounded at the impotency of his device, now came forth, of his own accord, in company with all the members of his council, to meet Columba. As soon as he reached the place where the Saint waited his approach, Brude welcomed the holy man with every demonstration of kindness and respect. In their intercourse, ever after, the conduct of the King towards Columba was distinguished by the same courtesy, which he evinced on this occasion.

The Magi—this was the name given to the priests of the national superstition—were the only persons, from whom the missionaries had now reason to apprehend any serious opposition. These men, notwithstanding the sanction which Columba's mission had received from the Monarch, exerted all their artifice to render the labours of the Saint unavailing. It happened, that on a certain occasion, the zeal of the

holy man was rewarded, by the conversion of an entire family to the Christian faith. The Magi, chagrined at his success, conceived the strongest dislike for those, whose conversion proved so mortifying to their importance. So strong indeed was their aversion against such as had renounced the prevailing superstition, that they were disposed to view with pleasure any calamity, which might befal the members of the newly converted family. It chanced, that immediately after this family had embraced the Gospel, a youth belonging to it sickened and died. The Magi, transported with malignant joy, pronounced the premature death of the child to be the punishment of the apostacy of the parents, and took occasion from the event, to proclaim the superiority of their Gods over the God of the Christians.

Fortunately, Columba was still in the vicinity, where this occurrence happened, and he was immediately apprized of it. Alarmed, lest the vain boasting of the Magi should trouble the faith of the Neophytes, and excite the popular prejudice against the Gospel, the Saint repaired without delay to the place where the newly converted family resided. On his arrival there, he endeavoured to console the sorrowing parents, by enlarging on the Divine omnipotence, and by exhorting them, to look with confidence to the true God for relief in their affliction. Having spent some time in this sacred office, the holy man next proceeded to the apartment, where the body of the deceased child lay. Every person being then ordered to withdraw, the Saint poured forth his soul in prayer, supplicating the Almighty, to raise from death and restore the departed child to the sorrowing parents. At the close of his fervent orison, the Missionary directed his eyes towards the lifeless remains of the youth, and exclaimed, "In the name of the Lord Jesus arise, and stand upon thy feet." Heaven

listened propitiously to the prayer of its minister, and the child was immediately restored to life. As soon as this happy effect was accomplished, Columba, taking the child by the hand, conducted him to the apartment where the disconsolate parents remained. The voice of lamentation was now quickly succeeded by the most joyous exclamations. The people assembled together in crowds to witness the wonderful work, which the Missionary had performed, and testified by their shouts both their grateful acknowledgments to the Saint, and their faith in the power of the God whom Columba adored.

The interests of the establishment, which the Saint had founded at Hy, required, that he should occasionally interrupt his apostolick labours in Pictland, in order to revisit that institution. His solicitude, however, for the conversion of the Picts, impelled him, to spend, in his visits to Hy, only the time which the welfare of his infant institution there absolutely demanded. As soon as he had discharged the duty which he owed his brethren at Hy, it was the Saint's usage, to resume without delay his missionary functions among the Picts. At length, by the unwearied exertions of the holy Missionary, the great majority of the inhabitants were gained over to the doctrine and practice of the Gospel. Some few indeed remained, who still adhered to the errors of paganism. But their blindness, as it resulted from a wilful and perverse obstinacy, the Saint could not hope, by any exertion on his part, to overcome. Abandoning these unhappy persons to their melancholy fate, Columba therefore turned his attention to others, who were more likely to profit by his apostolick labours.

From Pictland, Columba is said to have passed to the Orkney Islands, and to have announced in them the faith of Christ. Of the history of his mission in these islands,

there are, however, but few vestiges now extant. Fortunately, the records of his exertions to diffuse religion and civilization among the inhabitants of the Hebrides have been more faithfully preserved. From them we learn, that this Apostolick man devoted himself assiduously to the instruction of these islanders. With untiring zeal, he frequently passed from Hy, to the adjoining isles, to minister to the spiritual wants of the inhabitants. At length, through his exertions, missionaries of distinguished piety were distributed through many of these sequestered districts, and churches and monasteries arose in places, which, but a short time previously, were polluted by the rite of an impure worship.

The religious concerns of the Christian congregations, who now inhabited Pictland and the Hebrides, together with the care of the monastick institutions, which the Saint had established both in these places and in Ireland, supplied abundant occupation for the zeal of Columba. Still, his solicitude for the salvation of his fellow men, often called him from his other engagements, in order that he might improve the state of religion among the British Scots. In different parts of the territory, which was inhabited by this people, the Saint succeeded in founding institutions similar to those, which he had already erected in the neighbouring kingdom.

But while Columba laboured thus successfully in these places, he was not unmindful of the many endearing relations, by which he was connected with his native land. His anxiety to revive and diffuse widely among his countrymen, the spirit of religious perfection, induced him, sometimes, to interrupt his Apostolick labours abroad, that he might revisit Ireland. On these occasions, however, the term of his delay was rendered necessarily very short, by the numerous avocations, which almost constantly required his presence, either in Hy, or in the churches which he had founded in

North Britain. His last visit to the land of his nativity is referred to the year 490.

A controversy of some importance had arisen between Aiden, the Sovereign of the British Scots, and Aidus, the Supreme Monarch of Ireland. It was to adjust this dispute, that Columba visited his native country, at the above mentioned period. The respective claims of the Royal parties were examined before an assembly of the States of Ireland, which was convened at Drumceat. On the part of Aiden, Columba asserted the hereditary right of that Prince to the Sovereignty of Dalrieda, and demanded, that the inhabitants of that territory should be relieved from the tribute, which the other principalities of Ireland were accustomed to pay to the Chief Monarch of the kingdom. Aidus, on the other hand, contended, that as the territory of which there was question formed a part of the realm, it could not be exempt from those obligations, which the several states of the kingdom owed to the principal Sovereign. The decision of the point at issue was at length referred to the Saint himself. But Columba being unwilling to pronounce upon it, the question, by his advice, was submitted to the judgment of St. Colman, a man who was deeply versed in legal and ecclesiastical learning. In the opinion of Colman, the cause of Aidus was better sustained, than that of his opponent. To heal, however, the dissension which had arisen, Colman proposed, that a solemn league should be entered into between the contending parties, by which they were to pledge themselves, to render mutual assistance to one another, against any enemy who might disturb their respective dominions. The proposal of Colman was received with joy by the entire assembly, and, on both sides, a treaty to the effect just now mentioned was cheerfully agreed to.

The object of his present mission to Ireland being attained, Columba prepared to depart from Drumceat. Before he set out, his compassion for the sufferings of Scanlan, Prince of Ossory, whom Aidus, for some political cause, detained in prison, induced the Saint to petition for that Prince's liberation. Aidus, indeed, was disposed to receive favourably any request, which Columba preferred. But, on this occasion, his fears, or perhaps his prejudices against Scanlan, prevented him from acceding to the petition of the Saint. Finding, that any further interference would be fruitless, Columba consoled the captive Prince with the cheering assurance, that he should survive his captor, and rule for many years over his native principality. The Saint then gave the Prince his benediction and withdrew.

From Drumceat, Columba proceeded to visit the principal religious houses of his institute, which were diffused throughout the kingdom. The remaining part of the time, which he spent in Ireland, the Saint employed, in perfecting the disciplinary regulations of the monastery, which he had founded at Durrough. As soon as this important object was accomplished, he prepared to return to his retreat in the Island of Hy.

Thirty years had now nearly elapsed, since he had first settled in that sequestered habitation. During this long period, he had frequently offered up his prayers, and supplicated the Divine goodness, that as soon as that number of years should have elapsed, he might be called to enjoy the repose of the blessed. The term he had fixed for his mortal career, reached its close about the middle of the year Five hundred and ninety-three. As the long wished for consummation approached, his hopes of speedily attaining to a blissful immortality daily augmented. While indulging

in these happy anticipations, he was suddenly apprized in a vision, that it was ordained in the Divine councils, that he should spend four years more in the service of God, before he should be called to receive the reward of his labours. Full of submission to the Divine will, the Saint renounced at once his anxiety to be freed from this "body of death," and he disposed himself to await with patience the hour, when it would please his Creator to terminate his earthly career. The four years that intervened, between the revelation with which the Saint was favoured, and the close of his mortal life, Columba devoted with renewed fervour to the holy exercises which he had previously practised. At length, when the happy hour arrived, that was to put a period to his labours, the holy man, with that calm composure and that unclouded serenity of mind which belongs to the virtuous only, proceeded, in company of one of his disciples, to visit the buildings, which were connected with the monastery. Having before completed every arrangement, which he deemed conducive to the spiritual welfare of the institution, he was now particularly anxious to provide for the temporal wants of his brethren. With a parental solicitude, he, therefore, went himself to examine, if the supply of corn, that their storehouse contained, would suffice for their support, during the remaining part of the year. Having discovered, that he had no cause for uneasiness on this head, and being satisfied in mind, that he had now discharged all his obligations towards his brethren, the holy man revealed to his associate, that the close of his earthly career was at hand. Assisted by his attendant, he then advanced to the summit of an adjoining eminence, and from thence imparted his benediction to the monastery.

Of the few hours that remained, before the Saint departed from life, he spent a part, in transcribing a portion of the

Psalms from the Holy Scriptures. Having closed the last page which he wrote, with this appropriate verse, "They who seek the Lord shall not be deprived of any good," the holy man left to the disciples, who attended him, the care of completing the work, which he had begun. The evening had now arrived, and the Saint went to the Church, to attend the prescribed devotions, in company with his brethren. As soon as the stated offices were performed, he returned to his apartment. There, reclining on his stony couch, he delivered some instructions to his assistant, which by his directions were to be communicated to the Brethren. At midnight, the tolling of the bell summoned the Monks again to prayer, and, a second time, the holy man also accompanied them to the church. There he arrived, before any of the monks had yet appeared. Then casting himself on his knees, he poured forth the most fervent prayers to his Creator. While wholly absorbed in this devout exercise, his strength began rapidly to decay. His attendant arrived soon after, and found the Saint in a reclining posture before the altar, breathing forth his last. In an instant, the melancholy intelligence was diffused throughout the monastery, and the weeping brethren assembled to bid a last farewell to their venerated Abbot. When they arrived, the holy man had just strength enough left to enable him to recognize his spiritual children. Then fixing his eyes steadily upon them, his countenance at the same time illumined with a pleasing serenity, the venerable Abbot, by the help of his attendant, uplifted his right arm, and extending it forth, gave them his benediction. Shortly after this affecting ceremony had concluded, this illustrious Saint went to receive the reward, due to his tried fidelity in the service of his Creator.

For three days and three nights, his obsequies were

celebrated without intermission, and at the close of that period, his sacred remains were consigned to the grave, with the most religious solemnity. "His memory was long cherished, with every testimony of veneration, by the northern nations. The customs which his approbation had sanctioned, were with pious obstinacy, perpetuated by his disciples; his monastery was selected for the sepulchres of the Kings of Ireland, Scotland, and Norway; and the provincial Bishops, though in their episcopal functions, they preserved the superiority of their order, in other points submitted to the mandate of the Abbot, as the legitimate successor of Columba, a singular institution, of which no other example is recorded in the ecclesiastical annals."

"The rule which was followed by the disciples of Columba, has not been transmitted to us by any Latin writer; and the Irish copies of it which have been preserved, are written in a language, that has hitherto eluded the skill of the most patient antiquary. But Bede, in different parts of his works, has borne the most honourable testimony to their virtue. With a glowing pencil, he displays their patience, their chastity, their frequent meditation on the sacred writings, and their indefatigable efforts to attain the summit of Christian perfection. They chose for their habitation the most dreary situations; no motives, but those of charity, could draw them from their cells; and if they appeared in public, their object was to reconcile enemies, to instruct the ignorant, to discourage vice, and to plead the cause of the unfortunate. The little property which they enjoyed was common to all. Poverty they esteemed as the surest guardian of virtue; and the benefactions of the opulent they respectfully declined, or instantly employed in relieving the necessities of the indigent. One only stain did he discover in their character, an immoderate esteem for their fore-

fathers, which prompted them to prefer their own customs to the consent of all other christian churches; but this he piously trusted would disappear in the bright effulgence of their virtues."*

The system of monarchism first introduced into Ireland, was, we have seen, modelled after the institute, which St. Martin of Tours had established in Gaul. According to the economy of this system, the peculiar obligations of the monastick state was so regulated, as to permit the monks, to attend also to the active duties that now belong to the Secular Clergy. Thus from the earliest period of Christianity in Ireland, religious communities were established in that country, whose discipline was almost entirely similar to that, which in more modern times the Regular Canons of St. Augustine followed.

At the period, when St. Malachy was advanced to the Episcopal dignity, many of the Irish monasteries had ceased to exist,† and hitherto, no religious institutions of a different order appear to have been established in Ireland. It became therefore necessary to provide against the evils, which the decay of the Irish monasteries could not fail to occasion, and to introduce, from other countries, persons, who had been trained up to the practice of religious perfection, and who were qualified to instruct such of the Irish youth as aspired to Christian perfection, in the system, under which they had been themselves educated.

The great similarity between the monastick institute, which, from the conversion of the Irish people, had prevailed among them, and that which is called the order of the Canons regular of St. Austin, made it advisable

* Lingard's Anglo Saxon Church.

† The devastations of the Danes, in addition to the other evils they produced, occasioned also the destruction of many of the Irish monasteries.

for St. Malachy, to introduce into Ireland the members of the latter, rather than of any other religious institute. The trifling discrepancies between the rules, which these Canons followed, and the discipline received in the Irish Monasteries, contributed to obviate any prejudice against the new order, and to render its introduction acceptable to the Irish nation. The code of laws which the institute of St. Augustine sanctioned, while it excluded every indulgence that interfered with the duties of the sacred ministry, did not prescribe the austere exercises, which were enjoined by the rules of other religious orders. Indeed the nature of the duties which the regular Canons had to discharge, supplied a sufficient reason, from exempting these ecclesiasticks from the rigorous discipline, ordinarily enjoined by the monastick rule. An exact compliance with that discipline, would both encroach on the time which the Canons required for the discharge of their Sacerdotal functions, and unfit the more infirm members for the efficient discharge of missionary duties.

But besides the recommendation, which St. Augustine's institute derived, from its similarity to the ancient monastick system that prevailed in Ireland, there was another reason, which must have also greatly influenced St. Malachy in favour of that order. The interests of religion, in Ireland, had at this time suffered seriously from the unsettled political condition of that country. For a lengthened period, internal troubles and the repeated incursions of the Danes, had disturbed the peaceful retirement of the several religious establishments in every part of the kingdom. The Danes, at that time a savage and piratical nation, pillaged without distinction the civil and religious establishments of Ireland. The monasteries, on account of the riches which they were supposed to contain, attracted particularly the

rapacity of these fierce barbarians, and were deprived in many instances, both of the costly ornaments with which the piety of past ages had adorned their altars, and of their other most valuable effects. Had the plunderers been content with carrying off the sacred treasures of these institutions, the injury that resulted would have been repaired in a short time. But the savage disposition of the marauders, incited them, moreover, to perpetrate the most atrocious outrages against the religious inmates. After having rifled the monasteries of every thing they deemed valuable, it was the custom of these lawless depredators, to treat with the utmost indignity the peaceful inhabitants of the cloister, and to close their horrid feasts, by consigning to the flames the monastery and whatever plunder they were unable to carry away.

In the unhappy state of things which followed these calamities, it was impossible, that the order prescribed by the rules of the monastick institute could be faithfully observed. The relaxation of discipline, which was first occasioned by necessity, led in a short time, to the decay of that spirit of religious perfection, for which the Irish monks had been hitherto so much distinguished. In these circumstances, prudence required, that the peculiar austerities, which the monks had heretofore cheerfully practised, should be mitigated, and that a milder code, and one more suited to their infirmity, should be introduced. The moderation of the rule observed by the Regular Canons of St. Augustine, seemed to adapt that institute to the existing circumstances of the Irish Church, and the many advantages that would follow from its adoption were duly appreciated by the Bishops, and by the most influential of the Irish laity. Under their joint protection, communities of Ecclesiasticks, who belonged to the order of the Regular Canons, were therefore introduced, and

gradually established in different parts of the kingdom. As soon as the English obtained a settlement in the Island, they also evinced a becoming zeal in favour of the same institute, and by their exertions, religious houses of the Augustinian rule were erected in different parts of the territory under their jurisdiction.

But, however adapted the order was, of which we have been now treating, to the spiritual exigencies of the Irish nation, the anxiety of St. Malachy for the welfare of religion in his native land could not permit, that his countrymen should want that incentive to perfection, which the introduction of a more austere institute among them would supply. The ancient fervour for which the monks of Ireland were once distinguished, had now, indeed, become comparatively enervated. Yet, the holy Prelate confidently hoped, that some might be found, who still cherished an ardent desire for Evangelical perfection, and who were anxious to emulate the example of their countrymen in preceding ages.

When journeying to the Apostolick See, St. Malachy stopped for a few days at the celebrated monastery of Clairvaux. The Saint, charmed with the piety which the members of that institution evinced, anxiously desired, that he should be permitted to spend the rest of his life among them. Influenced by this desire, he earnestly solicited the Pope, to accept his resignation of the Episcopal dignity. The Pontiff, wisely judging, that the loss of so holy a prelate would prove most injurious to the cause of religion in Ireland, could not be prevailed upon to acquiesce in the Saint's petition. Malachy, finding himself excluded from this retreat, resolved to employ his exertions, in introducing the same institute into Ireland, which was then established at Clairvaux.

A period of about forty years had now elapsed, since Robert, Abbot of Molesne, had founded the monastery of Clairvaux. The religious of Molesne professed to follow the admirable rule, which the enlightened piety of St. Benedict had traced out for his disciples. "At the age* of fourteen, Benedict, to avoid the contagious example of the Roman youth, buried himself in a deep and lonely cavern, amid the mountains of Subiaco. Six and thirty months, the young hermit passed in this voluntary prison, unknown to any except his Spiritual director, a monk of an adjacent monastery: but a miracle betrayed him to the notice of the publick; his example diffused a similar ardour around him; and his desert was quickly inhabited by twelve confraternities of monks, who acknowledged and revered him as their parent and legislator. But the fame of Benedict awakened the jealousy of his neighbours. Their calmunies compelled him to quit his solitude, and he retired to the summit of Mount Cassino, in the ancient territory of the Volsci. There he spent the remainder of his years in the practice of every monastick virtue, and the possession of those honours which that age was accustomed to confer on superior sanctity. To his care, the Patricians of Rome entrusted the education of their children; his cell was visited by the most distinguished personages, who solicited his benediction; and Totila, the haughty conqueror of Italy, condescended to ask his advice, and trembled at the stern reproof of the holy Abbot."

"During the two centuries which had elapsed since the retreat of St. Antony into the desert, the monks had gradually degenerated from the austere virtue of their founders, and Benedict composed his rule, not so much to restore the vigour, as to prevent the total extinction of the ancient

* Lingard's Anglo Saxon Church.

discipline. "The precepts of monastick perfection," says the humble and fervent legislator, "are contained in the inspired writings: the examples abound in the works of the holy fathers. But mine is a more lowly attempt, to teach the rudiments of a Christian life, that when we are acquainted with them, we may aspire to the practice of sublime virtue." But the admirers of monarchism were not slow to appreciate the merit of his labours. From Gregory the Great, his rule obtained the praise of superior wisdom; and the opinion of the Pontiff was afterwards adopted or confirmed by the general consent of the Latin Church. In distributing the various duties of the day, Benedict was careful, that every moment should be diligently employed. Six hours were allotted to sleep. Soon after midnight, the monks arose to chaunt the nocturnal service; during the day they were summoned seven times to the church to perform the other parts of the canonical office; seven hours were employed in manual labour; two in study; and the small remainder was devoted to the necessary refection of the body. Their diet was simple, but sufficient; twelve, perhaps eighteen ounces of bread, a hemina of wine, and two dishes of vegetables, composed their daily allowance. The flesh of quadrupeds was strictly prohibited; but the rigor of the law was relaxed in favour of the children, the aged, and the infirm. To the colour, the form, and the quality of their dress, he was wisely indifferent, and only recommended that it should be adapted to the climate, and similar to that of the labouring poor. Each monk slept in a separate bed: but all lay in their habits, that they might be ready to repair at the first summons to the church. Every thing was possessed in common: not only articles of convenience, but of necessity, were received and resigned at the discretion of the Abbot. No brother was allowed to

cross the threshold of the monastery without the permission of his Superior; at his departure he requested the prayers of the community; at his return he lay prostrate in the church to atone for the dissipation of his thoughts during his absence. Whatever he might have seen or heard without the walls of the convent, he was commanded to bury in eternal silence. The favour of admission was purchased with a severe probation. On his knees, at the gate, the postulant requested to be received among the servants of God: but his desires were treated with contempt, and his pride was humbled by reproaches. After four days his perseverance subdued the apparent reluctance of the monks: he was successively transferred to the apartments of the strangers and of the novices; and an aged brother was commissioned to observe his conduct, and instruct him in the duties of his profession. Before the expiration of the year, the rule was read thrice in his presence; and each reading was accompanied with the admonition, that he was still at liberty to depart. At last, on the anniversary of his admission, he entered the church, and avowed before God and the community, his determination to spend his days in the monastick profession, to reform his conduct, and to obey his superiors. The solemn engagement he subscribed with his name, and deposited on the altar."

"The legislator who wishes to enforce the observance must punish the transgression of his laws. But in apportioning the degree of punishment, Benedict advised the Superior to weigh not only the nature of the offence, but the contumacy of the offender. There were minds, he observed, which might be guided by a gentle reprimand, while others refused to bend to the severest chastisement. In his penal code he gradually proceeded from more lenient to coercive measures. The inefficacy of private admonition was suc-

ceeded by the disgrace of public reproof: if the delinquent proved insensible to shame, he was separated from the society of his brethren; and the continuance of his obstinacy was rewarded with the infliction of corporal punishment. As a last resource, the confraternity assembled in the church by order of the Superior, and recommended, with fervent prayer, their rebellious brother to the mercy and grace of the Almighty, He was then expelled: but the gates of the convent were not shut to repentance. Thrice the returning sinner might expect to be received with kindness in the arms of an indulgent father: but the fourth relapse filled up his measure of iniquity, and he was ejected for ever."

Such was the rule, which at the commencement of their institute, the religious of Molesne engaged to follow. But, in the accurate observance of this admirable code, time, the great innovator of all human arrangements, had introduced some relaxation. The more zealous of the brethren at Molesne saw and lamented this degeneracy from their former piety. Their complaints were listened to with impatience by their less fervent associates. Disappointed at the result of their appeal to the religious feelings of their companions, they besought God in prayer, to conduct them to some place, where they might fulfil faithfully the vows, which they had solemnly taken at his altar.

The discipline of their institute, they however remembered, forbad them to adopt any undertaking, which was not first sanctioned by the authority of their Superior. In obedience to this ordinance, they communicated their intention to Robert, the Abbot who then presided over their community. Robert listened attentively to their representation, and promised not only to co-operate in the accomplishment of their design, but also to associate himself to them in the

reformed institute, which they proposed to establish. To secure the approbation of the Holy See, Robert, accompanied by six of the brethren who desired to effect the reformation of the institute, proceeded to Lyons, and made known their intentions to Hugo, the Archbishop of that See, and the Legate of the Roman Pontiff for France. The Legate entered cordially into the views of the Abbot and of his companions, and enjoined them officially to persevere in their pious purpose. Cheered by the encouragement which the representative of the Holy Father gave to their undertaking, the deputation returned to Molesne. Having selected from among the brethren, those whose zeal in the cause of reform appeared most determined, they quitted Molesne for ever.

The place they chose for the new monastery was Citeaux. Citeaux was situated in the diocess of Chalons, about five leagues from the town of Dijon. The grant of the site which they had pitched upon was readily obtained from Rainard, Viscount of Beaune, the Nobleman to whom this territory belonged. The approval of Gautier, the Bishop of Chalons, being also secured, they forthwith prepared to fix their abode at Citeaux. Citeaux was then a dreary and deserted solitude, fit only for the abode of the savage inhabitants of the forest. But to persons who aspired to be the faithful imitators of St. Benedict, its dreariness and desolation rendered the abode at Citeaux peculiarly desirable.

In a short time, they succeeded in clearing as much ground, as sufficed for their projected habitation. The style of the new building entirely accorded with the austere sanctity of the monks, by whom it was constructed. A series of connected wooden cells sufficient for their present exigencies, made up all the accommodation which the monastery of Citeaux supplied to its first inmates. The Bishop of

Chalons, being anxious to invest the new establishment with the privileges which belong to an approved religious institution, conferred the dignity of Abbot on the Superior. Thus, by the Bishop's care, the humble abode of the monks at Citeaux was elevated to the importance of a regular Abbey.

The conduct of Robert and of his companions had greatly mortified the brethren at Molesne. By the separation of the monks at Citeaux from their associates, the reputation of the latter for superior sanctity began to be called in question. A prejudice was in consequence excited against them among those who resided in their vicinity. The Nobles and the other powerful Laics by whose patronage they had been hitherto shielded from aggression, participated in the unfriendly feeling, which now prevailed against the brethren at Molesne. The interests of the establishment hence daily declined, and the monks resolved to appeal to superior authority in order to compel their former Abbot to return again to Molesne. Thus only, they conceived, would it be possible, to subdue the hostility to their institution, which his departure had occasioned, and to save their monastery from utter ruin. After repeated exertions, their efforts to recall home their former Superior proved at length successful.

Alberic, a monk of Citeaux, distinguished not less for proficiency in sacred and profane letters, than for his zeal for the institution to which he belonged, was elected in place of the late Abbot, Robert.

The institution at Citeaux, notwithstanding the zeal and ability of the newly elected Superior, made but little progress. One important advantage, Alberic, indeed, contributed to secure for the monastery under his care. By his directions, a deputation of the monks of Citeaux, furnished with letters of recommendation both from the Papal Legates,

then in France, and from other influential persons, proceeded to Rome, to solicit for the infant establishment at Molesne, the special patronage of the Holy See. Paschal, the second Pope of that name, then filled St. Peter's chair. That Pontiff listened favourably to the prayer of the petitioners, and extended his pastoral protection to the Abbey of Citeaux. By a bull issued on this occasion, Paschal announced, that the monks of Citeaux were placed by him under the immediate care of the Holy See, without however being thereby exempted from the obedience, which they owed to the Bishop of the diocess where they resided. Encouraged by this solemn declaration of the Pontiff in their favour, the Brethren of Citeaux now resolved, to adhere with the most scrupulous exactness to their determination, of complying with the primitive rule of St. Benedict.

In the simplicity of the code, which Benedict composed, various innovations had been introduced. Since his time, the monks who professed to be his disciples, in order to distinguish themselves from others, had assumed a peculiar mode of dress, though their master had not assigned any particular habit to his disciples, but had simply ordained, that their clothing should be plain, and such as was consistent with their sacred calling. During the same interval, the flesh of quadrupeds began to be served up in the refectories of the Benedictine institute; and the religious houses of this order had acquired different kinds of temporal property.

These relaxations, the monks at Citeaux deemed inconsistent with the austerity and poverty, which their venerated Parent had enjoined on his children. To restore the discipline of their order to its pristine purity, they resolved, in the first place, to receive from the charity of their benefactors, only as much land, as would suffice, when reclaimed

and cultivated by their own labour, to supply them with a scanty subsistence. Even this small benefaction, they resolved not to receive, unless the land to be assigned for their support were remote from the bustle and dissipation of the world. Every other species of property, they proposed to renounce, as dangerous to that spirit of detachment from worldly riches, by which St. Benedict desired, that his children should be distinguished.

The rule being now fixed, by which their temporal concerns were to be regulated, it only remained, that they should provide for the future government of their institute. On this point, a difficulty of some moment presented itself to their consideration. The various duties of their Superior could not, it was obvious, be attended to, unless the person appointed to that office were exempted from many of the observances, prescribed by the rule. Such an exemption, they conceived, would be prejudicial to the spiritual interests of the community. To obviate the inconvenience, and secure the necessary attention of the Superior to every department under his care, they resolved, to choose, henceforward, a Lay brother, for that station, who, without any deviation from the received discipline, might discharge the several duties of his office.

Every disciplinary arrangement being thus completed, there was but one subject left, which occasioned solicitude to the religious inhabitants of Citeaux. How, they anxiously inquired of one another, could they render permanent in the church an order of monks, who would faithfully practise the austere perfection, which they themselves had undertaken to observe? The Abbey of Citeaux had been now established for fourteen years. And yet, during that protracted interval, no addition had been made to the number of their brethren. The rules of their institution were indeed

known and admired by all. But of the many who professed to admire the perfection which these rules inculcated, there was not even one solitary individual, possessed of sufficient courage to emulate the example of the persons, whose sanctity he applauded. Nay, to several of those, who were most friendly to the institution at Citeaux, it had begun to appear dubious, whether the members of that establishment would themselves persevere in the observance of the austere rule, which they had laid down for the regulation of their own conduct.

While the prospects of the new institute were thus clouded, Alberic, Abbot of Citeaux, died. His successor was an Englishman, named Harding. Harding was one of those who accompanied the monks, when they quitted Molesne, in order to found the establishment of Citeaux. His conduct since the erection of the new Abbey had earned for him the approbation and esteem of his brethren. Before the death of Alberic, Harding, in the capacity of Prior, had assisted that Abbot in the government of the community. The qualities he evinced in the discharge of that office obtained for him the unanimous suffrages of his brethren, when they assembled to choose a successor for Alberic. The zeal of the newly elected Abbot for the rigid enforcement of the rule outstripped even that, which his predecessors had displayed. In his opinion, the austere simplicity, to which the religious of his institute were obliged, would suffer, were they to behold within the precincts of their enclosure the worldly splendour, that was exhibited by certain Noblemen, who, on particular festivals, held their court in the apartments of the Abbey. At his instance, therefore, this usage was repealed, and admission to the Abbey allowed to those nobles only, who should consent to enter there unaccompanied by the customary train of their attendants.

But the zeal of Harding was not satisfied with removing the display of earthly grandeur from the view of his brethren. To his severe virtue, it seemed incongruous, that the sanctuary of a brotherhood, who had devoted themselves to the observance of the most austere poverty, should glisten with the splendour of the gold, the silver, and the costly silks, of which the sacred vessels and the vestments were composed. Without hesitation, the Abbot proceeded to enforce in the sanctuary the regulations that suited his own stern piety, and he executed this resolve with the same determination which he evinced, in excluding from the monastery the pomp and dissipation of the neighbouring nobles.

In relieving the sanctuary from what he deemed its superfluous splendour, the Abbot, however, had the wisdom to observe, that the dignity of the Eucharistic rite required some departure from the rubric, by which he proposed to regulate in his monastery, the other parts of religious worship. It was fitting, he pronounced, that the richness of the holy vessel, wherein the August Sacrament of the Eucharist was reserved, should in some degree correspond to the grandeur of the treasure therein contained. The Chalice that was used in the celebration of the holy Sacrifice of the Altar, and the Ciborium in which the Eucharist was deposited, the Abbot accordingly ordered to be made of pure silver, and to be washed with gold. But the other vessels, which were not destined for the sacred purposes just now mentioned, were by his directions to be composed of metals of inferior value. In accordance with the same principle, on which the preceding regulations were grounded, Harding laid down rules, by which the quality of the cloth required for the sacred vestments should be also determined.

The enforcement of these stern maxims contributed, indeed, to accustom the inmates of Citeaux to the practice of

an austere and simple virtue. But the importance of this advantage seemed to be counterbalanced, by the discouraging influence of this severe discipline on those, who might, if the rule were less rigid, be disposed to embrace the monastick institute established there.

Six years had now nearly elapsed, since Harding was advanced to the office of Abbot, and no addition was yet made to the number of the Brethren under his care. The fears of the monks, that the institute, for which they were so solicitous, would be consigned to the same grave with themselves, began now daily to increase. In the presence of that Almighty Being, to serve whom with the greatest perfection, they had engaged in their present course of life, the monks of Citeaux unceasingly lamented the great injury, which would be thus inflicted on the cause of religion. To avert so serious a spiritual calamity, they unceasingly offered up their most fervent supplications to the throne of the Most High.

Their prayer was at length favourably received. At a time, when they least expected it, when even the comfort supplied by hope had almost forsaken them, thirty candidates, all of exalted station in society, presented themselves, and petitioned to be admitted among the brethren. At the head of this heroic band of aspirants to Evangelical perfection, was Bernard, afterwards the illustrious Abbot of Clairvaux. The conspicuous place, which St. Bernard holds in ecclesiastical history, as well as the connexion which his intimacy with St. Malachy formed between him and the Irish Church, entitles him to particular notice on the present occasion.

Bernard was a native of Fontaines, a place situated in the vicinity of Dijon. The Baronial honours of Fontaines descended by inheritance to his Father, Tescelin. Those

of Montbar belonged to Bernard, the Father-in-Law of Tescelin. Tescelin enjoyed the high reputation of being a Nobleman, whose conduct was governed by the principles of true honour, and of unblemished virtue. His wife, Aleth, was a consort, in every respect worthy of such a Nobleman. Every hour, which the exact discharge of her domestic duties allowed her, Aleth employed in administering consolation and relief to the distressed. But it was in the fulfilment of her duties as a Parent, that the splendour of Aleth's virtue shone forth in the greatest lustre. Her children, according as each of them came into life, this pious matron immediately offered up to God, acknowledging that each child was a sacred deposit confided to her for a time, of which the Almighty Giver would demand, one day, a rigorous account. The duty of nourishing them from their birth at her own breast, she deemed so imperative on a Christian matron, that, though charged with a numerous family, she never exempted herself from this obligation. In bringing up her tender offspring, Aleth never forgot, that she was bound to inure them betimes, to restrain the cravings of appetite, and prepare them for the practice of Christian mortification. While she carried in her womb Bernard, the subject of the present narrative, a dream of a singular import is said to have troubled her repose. To calm her disquiet, she disclosed the cause of her anxiety to a friend, distinguished for his fidelity in all the duties of religion. The good man consoled her by the assurance, that the child of her womb would be, at the same time, a zealous defender of the Catholic faith, and an eloquent preacher of the Divine word. This comfortable assurance administered by one, whom she regarded as a special favourite of Heaven, encouraged Aleth to consecrate Bernard with renewed fervour to the service of his Creator.

The opening youth of this devoted child corresponded to the prediction, with which his nativity was ushered in. His early display of superior mental powers excited in his friends the most gratifying anticipations of the brilliancy of his future career. But every consideration of this nature was lost in the admiration, which his extraordinary piety attracted. All who witnessed the conduct of the young Bernard, remarked with astonishment the early predilection which he showed for retirement and meditation. While his love for retirement and meditation formed the theme of general admiration, the religious simplicity, the modesty and the affability which distinguished the Saint from his companions, secured for him the esteem and affection of those who were honoured with his acquaintance. From his early youth, Bernard made it the constant object of his earnest prayer, to obtain from God the virtue of undefiled purity. His attention to profane studies, he endeavoured to sanctify, by his determination to render his acquaintance with them subservient to the sacred studies, in which he was shortly to engage. At the tender age of fourteen, he had the misfortune to be deprived by death of his mother's protection. The regulation of his conduct was now almost entirely left to his own discretion. His various accomplishments of mind and body multiplied the dangers, to which his elevated rank so much exposed him. Still he never forgot, in the hour of temptation, the salutary impression, which his mother's example and instruction had made upon him.

Hitherto, he had, indeed, been fortunate enough to escape the dangers, which beset his virtues. But he felt every day more deeply convinced, how difficult it would be for him, to persevere in his good resolutions, amid the incentives to vice with which society abounded. He determined, therefore, to seek out a retreat, where, sheltered from the dangers

of the world, he might wholly devote himself to the all-important concern of his eternal salvation. The place he chose as most favourable to his holy design, was the Abbey of Citeaux. His final resolution of retiring thither, he adopted in a church, which adjoined to his paternal abode. Having entered this church, the holy youth poured forth his soul in prayer, imploring Heaven to direct him in the course, which he was about to follow. While he prayed, the contemplation of the great object he had in view, and his trembling solicitude for the accomplishment of his purpose, drew from his eyes a copious flood of tears.

His determination respecting his own future conduct being now finally taken, his next care was employed in securing the spiritual welfare of those, with whom the ties of relationship or friendship had connected him. With this view, he revealed his intentions to four of his brothers—his fifth brother was yet an infant—and exhorted them with earnestness to unite with him "in choosing that better part, which could never be taken from them." From his brothers, the Saint passed to his other relations. These he also addressed in the same earnest manner, in which he had spoken to his brothers. On the part of all those, whose co-operation Bernard desired, there were many difficulties to be overcome, which impeded a compliance with his entreaties. Matrimonial engagements stood in the way of some, which, were they removed, those who were thus detained, declared, that they were ready to embrace the mode of life which Bernard proposed. With others, to whom the Saint addressed himself, the civil or military honours which they either at present enjoyed, or hoped soon to attain, possessed attractions more inviting, than were the spiritual delights to be derived from the practice of perfect virtue.

But the zeal of Bernard was not to be deterred by such

difficulties. The subject of his first conference, he again and again renewed, and he pressed with increased earnestness, on the consideration of his brothers and his other friends, the strong incentives, which he had before employed to secure their co-operation. Gaudri, Bernard's Uncle, Lord of Torullon, a Nobleman, distinguished for his great power, and also for his great personal bravery, was the first, who yielded to his nephew's solicitations, and consented to embark with him in his spiritual enterprise. The brothers of the Saint, encouraged by the example of Gaudri, soon followed. One brother only, the youngest, now remained, whose tender age unfitted him as yet for the austere discipline of the Cloister. The society of this youth, Bernard moreover deemed necessary for the consolation of his aged Father.

Every arrangement being now completed, Bernard and his four brothers went together, to crave their Father's blessing before they departed for Citeaux. When this affecting ceremony was concluded, they prepared to quit their paternal abode for ever. As they passed through the street, which adjoined their Father's mansion, they chanced to see Nivard—thus their youngest brother was named—and his youthful companions engaged together at play. "Nivard," exclaimed the eldest brother Guy, "you alone are to be the inheritor of all our earthly possessions." "Yes," replied Nivard, "Heaven is your portion, while earth is my inheritance: the partition is unequal." Nivard's tender age obliged him for the present, indeed, to remain under his Father's care. But, in a short time, that obstacle was removed, and Nivard too left his Father's house, that he might walk in the footsteps of his brothers.

Besides his brothers, and his Uncle Gaudri, Bernard had succeeded in engaging in his spiritual enterprise twenty-

three other candidates, among whom were several of an exalted station in society. Of this sacred band, some had contracted the obligation of marriage, and these were enabled to enter on their present undertaking, because their wives also had consented to it, and had resolved themselves to engage in the religious state. To provide a suitable asylum for the pious Ladies, who had thus co-operated in the accomplishment of Bernard's holy design, was the first object which claimed the attention of the new fraternity. Such an asylum was soon procured for them, by the exertions of the Abbot of Citeaux. Julli, situated in the diocess of Langres, was the place, where the Convent for these religious females was erected. As the situation of this establishment lay at a considerable distance from Citeaux, the care of the new institution was consigned to the Abbot of Molesne.

The edifying conduct of Bernard, after he had entered the monastery of Citeaux, surpassed even the anticipations, which the admirable tenor of his previous life had excited. His constitution, naturally delicate, was oftentimes unequal to the austerities prescribed by the rule. But his ardent aspirings after Evangelical perfection triumphed over his corporal infirmities, and rendered him conspicuous for an undeviating compliance with the most minute observances. The time, which was not occupied in manual labour, Bernard devoted assiduously to the study of the Inspired Writings. By night, and by day, he meditated on the sublime truths which they contain, and he laboured to obtain by prayer, and the study of the Holy Fathers, the faithful understanding of the Sacred Volume.

Meanwhile, two houses of the Cistercian order—thus the institute at Citeaux was denominated—were erected, one at La Ferté, the other at Pontigni. Both these establishments

were peopled by monks from the parent monastery. The extraordinary virtue of the monks of Citeaux began now to be duly appreciated by their countrymen, and an opportunity for founding a third house of the Order at Clairvaux soon presented itself.

Clairvaux, previously to the introduction of the Cistercian monks there, was known only as a haunt for robbers, who infested in great numbers the neighbouring country. Before St. Bernard's time it was called "the Valley of Wormwood," a name which is said to have been given to it, on account of the atrocities which were perpetrated there. Thither, in obedience to the orders of the Abbot, a few of the monks of Citeaux repaired, in order to establish there a monastery of their institute. The care of the newly formed community was to be confided to Bernard. The youth of the Saint, the weakness of his health, his inexperience in the religious state—one year only had elapsed, since he had engaged in the monastick profession — all conspired, to impress his brethren with the persuasion, that he was wholly inadequate to the discharge of the important office entrusted him. The same impression which his associates had conceived was entertained by others also, who, judging from his very youthful appearance, pronounced, that he could not possess the qualifications requisite for the Superior of a religious community. So strong was the prejudice thus created against him, that when, according to the prescribed custom, he went to solicit the Episcopal benediction, before he entered on the duties of his new station, the Bishop's attendants smiled, when they saw a youth presented to a dignity, which they said should be reserved for persons, who were venerable alike for age and experience. To the Bishop, however, Bernard's qualifications for the honour which was to be conferred upon him soon became manifest. The

prepossessing modesty of the Saint, his prudent reserve, and the mature wisdom of his discourse, convinced the Bishop, that the man, who solicited his benediction, was specially favoured by Heaven.

Having obtained the Episcopal blessing, and the promise moreover of the Bishop's protection, Bernard, accompanied by twelve of his brethren, walked in procession to their intended place of abode, chaunting the Divine praises as they went along. As soon as they arrived in the Valley of Wormwood, they commenced to clear the ground, on which their future habitation was to be erected. This task being accomplished, the charity of the Bishop and of the neighbouring inhabitants was kindly employed, in assisting the monks to construct as many cells as were necessary for their accommodation. From the accounts that remain of this community, their austere habit of life appears to have been still more astonishing, than that of the first inhabitants of Citeaux. Barley, of the coarsest and most inferior quality, and sometimes vetches, or even cockle, supplied them with bread, while the boiled leaves of the beech tree served as vegetables to season their repast.

The candidates for admission to the monastery of Clairvaux, notwithstanding the terrifying severity of its discipline, augmented in number every day, and in a few years, one hundred and thirty monks obeyed the spiritual jurisdiction of St. Bernard. The fame of Clara-Vallis—for the sanctity of the new inhabitants had already obtained this appellation for the Valley of Wormwood—was rapidly diffused throughout the principal states of Europe. St. Malachy, at this time the most illustrious of the Irish Bishops, heard with delight the edifying account, which was every where given of St. Bernard and the other monks of Clairvaux, and he longed to see the holy men of whom

such extraordinary things were related. His journey to Rome afforded the Saint an opportunity of gratifying his wishes. While travelling through France, Malachy directed his steps to Clairvaux, and formed with the holy Abbot of that institution, an intimacy, which ever after subsisted between them. From Clairvaux, St. Malachy proceeded to Rome. Here, notwithstanding the importance of the other subjects which engaged his attention, his first request of the Pontiff was, that he might be permitted to spend the remainder of his days at Clairvaux. The earnestness of his prayer, the holy Prelate evinced, by the tears which he shed in abundance, when he supplicated the Pope to yield to his entreaty. Innocent knew too well, how much the Church of Ireland stood in need of St. Malachy's services, to consent to the petition of the Saint. In the true spirit of Christian piety, Malachy submitted to the better judgment of the Pontiff; and after he had settled the business on which he came to Rome, he prepared to return to Ireland.

On his way back to his native country, the Saint visited Clairvaux a second time, and expressed his deep regret, that he could not be permitted to unite himself to the members of the happy community which was settled there. To console himself, however, for being separated from them, he resolved to introduce into Ireland the holy institute, by which the brethren of Clairvaux regulated their mode of life. For this purpose, the Saint, when setting out for his native land, left four of his companions at Clairvaux, who, when instructed in the discipline of that monastery, were to return home, and initiate their fellow countrymen in the same course of perfect virtue. To ensure the success of this undertaking, Malachy, after having arrived in Ireland, sent other candidates also to Clairvaux, who were to be trained up in the exact fulfilment of the duties prescribed by that institution.

The conduct of the several candidates whom the Saint had sent thither, soon showed, that Malachy had made a judicious selection of the persons, by whom the Cistercian institute was to be introduced into Ireland: for, of the several candidates that the Saint had selected, all without exception, after the accustomed probation, were admitted to undertake by vow, the observance of the austere discipline enjoined by the rules of that order.

As soon as the last mentioned important ceremony was completed, St. Bernard sent the newly professed monks home to their native country, in company with some of the more experienced members of the house of Clairvaux. The zeal of Malachy, cheered by the success which attended his exertions to introduce the Cistercian order into Ireland, was now employed in procuring a suitable place of abode for the members of that institute, who had lately returned home. In a short time his efforts were blessed with success. Mellifont, situated in the county of Louth, was the spot which the Saint chose for the new monastery; and here the first Abbey that belonged to the Cistercian order in Ireland was established. From Mellifont, the new institute diffused itself rapidly over the other parts of the kingdom. So great was the success which attended the brethren of Mellifont, that even during the lifetime of St. Bernard, five other monasteries of the Cistercian order were erected in different parts of the country.

While tracing the origin and progress of monachism in Ireland, it will not be irrelative, to introduce some allusion to the history of St. Columbanus. From the biographers of this illustrious man, much that is interesting and instructive upon the state of the Irish Church in his time may be collected. The monastick rule of Columbanus having been borrowed principally from that which was followed in his

native land, an outline of it will assist the reader in forming a just estimate of the ancient religious institutions of Ireland. The birth of Columbanus is referred by our annalists to the middle of the sixth century. His parents consigned the care of his early youth to a guardian of approved piety and experience. Fortunately for Columbanus, his master was ardently devoted to the study of the Sacred Scriptures, The bent of his pupil's inclinations was soon directed by the example of his tutor to the study of the Inspired Writings. The proficiency of the pupil fully answered his master's care. While he was yet a boy, he composed, besides other tracts, an exposition of the psalms. From such a commencement, it was easy to anticipate, that Columbanus would be qualified, on some future day, to take a distinguished part in advancing the interests of the Christian religion. At an early age, the Saint entered the monastery of Bangor, then one of the most celebrated religious institutions of Ireland. Having spent some years in that establishment, and secured by his uniform exactness in all the duties of religion the esteem and veneration of his brethren, he resolved to leave his native country, and labour for the salvation of his fellow men, by preaching the Gospel in foreign parts. The state of the church of France, at this period, afflicted the piety of all who remembered how religion had once prospered in that kingdom. Christianity was, indeed, still professed by the inhabitants; but either through the disasters attendant on continual wars, or the tepidity of many among the Clergy, the faith which the people professed exercised but little influence on their conduct. To heal the evils resulting hence, Columbanus resolved to commence his missionary career in France. Having obtained the approbation of his Superior, and permission also, for such of the monks as desired it, to engage along with

him in the proposed enterprise, the Saint, accompanied by twelve of them, departed from Bangor. His zeal was requited with the success which it so well deserved.

Within a short period after his arrival in France, three extensive monasteries were founded by him, one at Anagrates, another at Luxeu, and a third at Fontaines. To these institutions, multitudes of the people from the adjoining country resorted for spiritual instruction. The holy Abbot himself devoted a considerable part of his time to the care of several young Noblemen, who had recourse to him for advice, on matters of the greatest importance to their eternal salvation. By the counsel of the Saint, many of these illustrious youths were induced to renounce the world, and to engage in the religious state.

It happened, unfortunately, that while the cause of the Gospel was thus prospering in France, a dispute concerning the proper time for celebrating Easter arose between the Saint and the Gallician Bishops. Another occurrence, which took place after this controversy had commenced, rendered the situation of Columbanus in France peculiarly unpleasant. Theodoric, the youthful Sovereign of Burgundy, influenced by the bad advice of his mother, Brunechild, preferred to indulge in forbidden pleasures, rather than engage in the honourable state of matrimony. Columbanus felt, that he was bound to reprove the licentiousness of the Monarch. Brunechild, alarmed, lest, if Theodric should obey the admonition of the Saint, her influence over her son would be supplanted by that of the person, whom Theodoric might choose for his consort, resented, in the strongest manner, the interference of Columban. The passion of the King for illicit gratification prompted him to support the resentment of his profligate parent, and the Saint found it necessary to retire from a country, where he could no longer

continue in safety. After encountering various difficulties, the venerable Abbot at length settled in Italy, and established in the Apennines the monastery of Bobio. Having passed a few years here in the practice of the same holy exercises, to which he had devoted himself while he sojourned in France, he died, (A. D. 615,) at the advanced age of seventy-two. His remains were deposited in the cemetery of Bobio. The miracles that were wrought at his shrine, rendered his name still more illustrious after his death, than it was during the period of his life.

The rule drawn up by Columban for the religious houses which he established is still preserved. The great admiration it obtained, is attested by the number of the monastick institutions in the different countries of Europe, which adopted the code, that St. Columban had sanctioned. To the study of the heart, this great spiritual legislator seems to have devoted his most serious attention. With a discerning eye, he marked the various devices, which human nature unceasingly employs to secure the gratification of its propensities. Attention to the practice of those internal acts of virtue which religion enjoins, was, indeed, in his estimation, of paramount importance. But, he was too well acquainted with the infirmities of mankind, not to know, that the perfect practice of virtue is greatly promoted by a due regard to external observances. Accordingly he was careful to regulate by his code, the manner, in which all the duties of the monks under his authority should be exactly performed. The practice of an austere temperance he particularly recommended to his disciples. The repast of the monk should on every occasion be frugal. Intemperance, or even satiety, the disciple of Columban was strictly commanded to avoid. His refection, he was admonished, should be such as his corporal necessities required, and not

what the cravings of sensuality would require. Herbs, legumes, biscuit tempered with water, supplied ordinarily the refreshment, of which the monks under the Saint's care were allowed to partake.* On certain occasions, indeed, fish was served up at the publick table, and the indulgence of a small portion of wine or of beer also allowed to the Brethren. But to the austere piety of Columban, flesh meat was a luxury, of which the inhabitants of the Cloister ought not to participate. The necessities of nature religion permitted them to satisfy; but the spirit of their state forbad them to gratify the cravings of appetite for superfluous indulgence.

But the solicitude of Columban for the perfection of those under his spiritual care, was not content with defining merely the quality of the food, which they required for their support. The time when they were to partake even of the simple refection permitted to them, he also exactly determined. The early part of each day was, according to his regulation, to be sanctified by prayer, and the performance of the various duties prescribed by the rule. Towards the approach of evening, when the several avocations of the day had been faithfully discharged, the brethren were assembled together in the publick refectory, in order to partake of their frugal meal. Two days in each week were sanctified by a more austere repast, than that of which the monks ordinarily partook.† Should any member of the community transgress the prescribed discipline on the days thus specially set apart for the practice of penance, the violation was punished, by obliging the delinquent to

* Reg. S. Columban. C. 3.

† In Ireland, Wednesday and Friday in each week were formerly Fast days of obligation on all the Faithful. This was the practice of the ancient Roman Church also. In course of time, the fast prescribed on Wednesday was transferred to Saturday. In some places, the three days were kept as fast days. This appears to have been the case in Ireland.

observe a still more severe fast, than that prescribed by the law which he had disregarded. From this penalty, however, the monk was exempted, if the plea of infirmity could be offered in his favour. When such an excuse could be justly pleaded, Columban, with becoming wisdom, pronounced, that a deviation from the received discipline was not inconsistent with the practice of the most perfect virtue. "Abstinence," thus speaks this enlightened legislator, "not regulated by prudence, is vicious and undeserving the name of virtue. Corporal refection must be daily used, because we must daily advance in virtue; we must attend each day to the duties of prayer, of labour, and of study."

In regulating the dress of their disciples, the early masters of a spiritual life in Ireland adopted the salutary principles, which reason and religion alike commend.* In their code of laws, the most exact attention was paid to the demands of modesty and necessity—the legitimate ends for which dress has been ordained. To attain these ends, a cheap and simple costume amply sufficed. Nothing therefore, in the opinion of these holy men, but a vain and worldly spirit could prompt the inhabitant of the cloister, to prefer, to the habit that was suited to his state, such a dress as is usually worn by the votaries of fashion, and of pleasure. Regard for his own character, as well as the injunction of religion, forbad the monk to indulge in so culpable an extravagance, and warned him to remain content with such clothing, as became his austere and sacred profession.

But careful as were the early teachers of a spiritual life, to require the observance of that external discipline which

* "The Irish Monks, as well as the Clergy at large, were distinguished from the laity by the tonsure; but they had no particular habit or form of dress." Lan. Vol. 4, p. 357. The Roman tonsure was adopted in Ireland along with the Roman rules regarding Easter. Before the Roman tonsure was introduced, the Irish Monks and Clergy used the semicircular tonsure. This tonsure appears to have been used also in some parts of Gaul. Lan. V. 3, p. 72.

the religious state of life demanded, they were yet far more solicitous, to exhort their disciples to the cultivation of internal sanctity. "Some," observed two of the most ancient Prelates of the Irish Church, in their instructions to the Abbot St. Fursæus, "glory, in what they have received from God, as if they had acquired it by their own labour; others afflict their bodies by fasting and abstinence, and are grieved at the slightest external transgression, while they think nothing of pride, which drove Angels from heaven; nor of avarice, through which, our first parents lost the bliss of the terrestrial paradise; nor of envy, which induced Cain to kill his brother Abel; nor of false testimony, by which our Saviour was condemned; and thus they look upon the sins, that are the most grievous in the sight of God, as the lightest, while those that are really venial they regard as heinous. To chastise the body suffices not, unless the soul be cured of malice and iniquity: charity is the root and perfection of every good work."

Among the charges which have been advanced in modern times against the monastick profession, that which reproaches the monks with having indulged in a sluggish and unprofitable course of life has been most frequently insisted upon. The injustice of this accusation, as far as regards the monastick order in Ireland, will appear evident to any one, who takes the trouble of glancing at the rules, by which the several avocations of the Irish monks were determined. In one of these rules—and the rule to be now adduced was enacted in the infancy of the Irish Church—the monk is instructed, that his means of subsistence, his food and his raiment, should be procured by the labour of his own hands.* In another of these venerable monuments of primitive Christianity in Ireland, the inmates of the Cloister are directed

* Vit. S. Brendan.

to labour in silence, and to partake of the bread which their own industry supplied.*

That these rules were followed in practice by the members of the Irish monasteries, we have abundant testimony, in the records that yet remain of the ancient ecclesiastical history of Ireland. The records here referred to frequently state, that the several religious institutions of which they make mention, were supported by the industry of the monks who resided in these establishments. Of the Bishops, who in some instances are stated to have presided over certain Irish monasteries, the same annals inform us, that these Holy Prelates joined with the monks under their authority, even in the humble labours of agriculture. Lest, however, the pursuits of industry should occasion any neglect of prayer, or of the other spiritual exercises that belong to a religious life, the monks were summoned at stated intervals, to unite together in celebrating the praises of the Most High. Five times during each day, and thrice during the night, the brethren assembled together in the church, to discharge that important obligation. The office recited on these occasions was chiefly composed of the psalms, and of lessons borrowed from the inspired writings of the old and new Testaments.

To uphold the austere discipline, by which the members of the monastick profession in Ireland were bound to regulate their conduct, an entire obedience to the will of the Superior was exacted from each candidate for the religious state.† The least departure from the sacred duty of obedience was pronounced in the monastick code to be highly criminal, and subjected the transgressor to severe reprehension.

* Vit. S. Fursæi.

† The age of twenty, was that which the Irish Church fixed for making the monastick vows. Synod S. Patric. C. 17.

Neither could the monk withdraw himself from the jurisdiction of his Abbot, by retiring from within the precincts of the monastery to which he belonged. To remain in the community to which he had been first attached, was a duty imposed on the monk by the rules of each religious house, and by the established discipline of the Irish Church.* If, indeed, through zeal for the cause of religion, he desired to leave his monastery and labour in the advancement of some important spiritual enterprise, or were he commanded by his Superior to engage in such an undertaking, he was then permitted to retire from the community, to which he had hitherto belonged.

Besides the practice of perfect obedience, the sanctity of the cloister was deemed to require in the candidate for the monastick profession an entire renunciation of every carnal pleasure. The man who wished to be enrolled among the perfect followers of the Redeemer, should, according to the legislators of the monastick state, have his heart detached from every earthly affection, and be wholly devoted to the things that appertain to God. This extraordinary singleness of mind, the masters of a spiritual life pronounced, not to be compatible with the obligations of the marriage state. With St. Paul, these holy men felt persuaded, "that he who is with a wife is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife; and he is divided—while he that is without a wife is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God."† Before the postulant could be numbered among the professed members of the monastick state, he was therefore called upon to consecrate himself to the practice of perpetual celibacy. "The Monk," an ancient canon of the Irish Church enacts, "who, after having consecrated himself to God, shall return

* Synod S. Patric. Canon. 34.

† Ep. Cor. C. 7.

either to secular pursuits, or shall marry, let him do penance for ten years; for three of these years let him fast on bread and water, and let him abstain for ever from the use of matrimony."* If the delinquent refused to perform the penance, which his crime was deemed to deserve, he was then ordered to be separated from the communion of the faithful, and forbidden to be present at their religious assemblies.†

On many occasions during his sacred mission, the Saviour was careful to encourage in his disciples a total disregard of worldly wealth. To the practice of this entire poverty, his own example incited his followers, more powerfully, even than the divine instructions, which he delivered. To the example of the Redeemer, and to the holy maxims which he laid down regarding the danger of riches, the first teachers of the monastick life constantly directed the attention of their followers. "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come, follow me," were the words which first induced St. Anthony to retire from the world into the deserts of Egypt. To each aspirant after Evangelical perfection, the solemn truth conveyed in this sentence was addressed, and a faithful compliance with its injunction required of him, when he devoted himself to the monastick state.

Nor did the Irish monk yield to his brethren in other countries, in the generous disregard which he evinced for wordly riches. The rules of the monastick institute in Ireland ordained, that the monks should employ themselves in such agricultural labours, as were appointed for them by their Superiors. But this industry was to be exerted, not for their own aggrandizement or for that of their respective communities, but in order that the means of a scanty

* Cummian, De pœnitentiarium mensura. Cap. 3. † Cum. Ibid.

support should be provided, and no burden imposed on their connexions in society. This was the only temporal return which they expected from their daily toil. In a description which is given by an ancient Irish Synod of the manner of life which the monks of Ireland led, the monks are represented as persons living in solitude, and without earthly property; because, continue the Fathers of this Synod, they are destined by their vocation to the patient endurance of watching and fasting, of hunger and thirst.*

The influence of a numerous society of persons, whose conduct was regulated by the admirable code of discipline, which has been now sketched, must have greatly contributed to the moral and civil improvement of the country in which they resided. In every extensive monastery, many of the inmates were employed in avocations of great importance to the publick welfare. The support of the Irish monks having been principally derived from their own industry, much attention must have been necessarily given by them to agricultural pursuits. That so numerous a fraternity as the Irish monks formerly were, and one so well qualified by their temperate and regular course of life, to prosecute with success the pursuits of industry, must have promoted many improvements in the important department of agriculture, cannot be questioned. In the lands, which are known to have once belonged to the monastick establishments, we may still oftentimes perceive many indications, of the skill and persevering industry of their former proprietors. The advantages, that must have resulted hence to the civil community throughout the kingdom, especially while the state of society in Ireland was yet imperfect, deserve to be highly appreciated. In another important department also, the monastick institutions of Ireland contributed to advance

* Synod S. Patric. C. 17.

the welfare of that country. Before the introduction of Christianity into Ireland, but little attention appears to have been shown there to the study of architecture. With the useful and elegant improvements in building, which were known in Rome, the first missionaries who came to Ireland must have been familiarly acquainted. The preference which the Irish people gave to buildings of wood, beyond those which were made of stone, was indeed unfavourable to the introduction, among them, of those improvements in architecture, which were then used in the country from which the missionaries had come. Still, by the exertions of the Clergy and of the monks, a church or a monastery was occasionally built of stone, after the manner adopted in other countries. Even in those edifices, which were constructed of wood, a becoming attention seems to have been paid by the Irish people to ornament and convenience.

A description of a church, which was erected at Kildare, has been left us by a writer,* who lived towards the close of the eighth century. This church, the writer informs us, took in an ample space, and was of an elevation proportioned to the extent of the ground enclosed within its walls. The space enclosed was distributed into three apartments, each of them remarkable for the greatness of its dimensions. Ample, however, as was the space, over which these compartments extended, the ingenuity of the architect had adopted one roof so skilfully, that it sufficed to cover the entire building. The apartment situated in the eastern extremity of the building was terminated to the north and south by two exterior walls of the edifice. A wooden partition, stretching to the north and south, and separated by a small interstice from the eastern extremity of the church, formed the enclosure of the sanctuary. Adjoining to the

* Cogitosus Vit. S. Brigid. C. 35.

sanctuary, at the northern and southern extremities of it, two doors were formed. By one of these doors, the Bishop and his assistant approached the sanctuary when about to celebrate the publick offices of religion; by the other, the religious Sisterhood of the adjacent Nunnery were admitted, when they wished to partake of the holy communion. Through the nave of the church, another partition was drawn from East to West. By this partition, two distinct apartments were formed. The apartment towards the south was appropriated to the male portion of the congregation; that towards the north, was assigned exclusively to females. To each of these apartments, a convenient entrance from the outside of the church conducted the respective classes of the congregation, for whose use they were intended.

To this description of the interior arrangement of the building, the same writer has subjoined an account of the tasteful manner in which the church was adorned. The appearance of the edifice, he tells us, was rendered very pleasing, by the number of windows, which were interspersed through the entire building. On the eastern extremity, which bounded the Sanctuary, a variety of Sacred images was depicted. These met the spectator's eye, the very instant that he entered the porch of the church. The remaining part of the wall, which was not ornamented with these holy representations, was covered over with linen cloths, or with some other suitable decoration. At either side of the altar, stood the sacred shrines of St. Brigid and St. Conlath. These were adorned with a profusion of the precious metals, exquisitely wrought. To these rich decorations, were added the still more costly ornaments of gems and precious stones. Over the shrines, crowns of gold and of silver were suspended, in order to typify the glory, with which the virtues of the Saints are rewarded in Heaven.

Among the important services which the ancient monastick institutions conferred on society, a principal place has been deservedly assigned to the enlightened and persevering zeal, with which the Monks laboured in transcribing both the literary productions of their own time, and those of the preceding ages. To this useful occupation, the Irish Monks devoted considerable attention. Of Columba alone, it is related, that he left three hundred manuscripts of sacred books in his own handwriting. Even in his last illness, this illustrious Saint employed himself in copying a part of the inspired writings.* Nor was this occupation discharged in a careless and unprofitable manner by the Monks. On the contrary, there is ample testimony to show, that they regarded it, as one, which should be fulfilled with a religious and even scrupulous fidelity. Of this, the conduct of Baithen, the disciple and successor of Columba, supplies a remarkable instance. It happened, that the duty of transcribing a copy of the Psalter was assigned to Baithen. As soon as he had completed his labour, he presented the newly transcribed copy to the Abbot, and requested at the same time, that the work should be revised by one of the Brethren. The Abbot having minutely examined the book, discovered that the omission of one vowel was the only imperfection in the volume, and the sole cause of Baithen's uneasiness.

Having submitted to the readers' attention the claims to veneration, which the Irish Monks had, both on account of

* The last verse of the Psalter which Columba transcribed, was the following "Inquirentes autem Dominium non deficient omni bono." In the present vulgate "minuentur" is substituted for "deficient" which was the reading in the old Italic version. "Hence it appears" says Doctor Lanigan, "that down to the time of Adamnan," (that is until the beginning of the eighth century) the Irish read the old vulgate, as it existed before the introduction of the corrections borrowed from St. Jerome."

their extraordinary sanctity, and the services they rendered to civil society, as well as to religion, in Ireland and in other countries, it will not be irrelevant, to touch upon the benefits, that were conferred on their native land, by those of the female sex, who formerly devoted themselves in Ireland to the engagements of a coventual life.

The origin of the coventual mode of life among the pious females of Ireland is coeval with the introduction of Christianity into that country. A particular rule of life, which was to be followed by those, who devoted themselves to the practice of chastity, was not however then prescribed; and the female, who consecrated her virginity to God, was allowed to remain under her paternal roof, and to practise there the holy exercises of the Cloister.

So early as the period of St. Patrick's Apostleship, many of the Devout Sex listened with delight to the exhortations, in which the Saint encouraged them to the practice of the Gospel counsels, and cheerfully consented to regulate their conduct according to these sublime maxims. During the same remote period, some of the pious females, who had consecrated themselves to the service of the Almighty, are stated to have withdrawn from the world into retirement, and to have led together a life entirely similar to that, which is followed in the conventual institutions of the present day. Under St. Brigid, the usage, which before her time only partially obtained, was generally adopted; and those pious females who desired to dedicate themselves to God, were formed into regular communities.

St. Brigid was born about the year Four hundred and fifty-three. Her Father, Dubtach, as well as her Mother, Brocessa, are represented by our Annalists, to have derived their origin from two illustrious families in Leinster. Though the parents of Brigid usually resided in

Leinster, yet a place in the vicinity of Dundalk is stated to have been that where the Saint was born. During her youth, every attention, which parents of distinguished rank and piety could employ, was assiduously paid to her education. The excellence of her natural abilities, the peculiar gracefulness of her person, her retiring modesty, and extraordinary charity for the poor, endeared Brigid, even while she was yet a child, to all her acquaintance, and secured for her their sincere esteem and admiration. As soon as she had attained sufficient maturity to engage in the marriage state, her parents prepared to make such arrangements, as would enable them to provide a suitable connexion for her. When the Saint was apprized of their intention, she immediately revealed to them her determination, to consecrate her virginity to God. From such parents, the Saint was assured, that she would experience no opposition. Nor did their conduct disappoint her expectations. After a short interval, Brigid made known her resolution to a Bishop, named Maccaille, who lived in the vicinity of her Father's abode. The well known reputation of the Saint for extraordinary virtue, induced the Bishop to sanction her pious determination. He consented to receive her sacred vows, and to admit her into the number of the Holy Virgins, who had consecrated themselves for ever to a life of celibacy. On a day appointed for the purpose, the solemn ceremony of her initiation in the religious state was performed. During the celebration of the holy rite, the Saint, divesting herself of the secular dress, which she had hitherto used, received in its stead, from the Bishop's hands, a white veil, with a mantle of the same colour—the habit, by which the holy Abbess and her religious Sisterhood were afterwards distinguished. A miracle of a singularly striking and impressive character is stated to have occurred,

during the profession of this illustrious virgin. That part of the sanctuary where the Saint knelt—she knelt on the extremity of the wooden platform which adjoined to the altar—recovered, in the presence of the by-standers, its original vitality, and put on a verdure, which it afterwards retained for a lengthened period.

At her profession, Brigid was accompanied by eight other ladies, who, encouraged by the Saint's example, consecrated their virginity to their Creator. In compliance with the wish of the parents of her new associates, Brigid agreed to found a religious establishment for herself and her companions, in the vicinity of the place where these ladies had resided before their profession. A convenient site having been fixed upon by the Bishop, a convent was erected upon it, and, in obedience to his commands, the Saint assumed the government of the community. Her reputation for sanctity became now daily more illustrious, and in proportion as it was diffused throughout the country, the candidates who sought to be admitted into her holy institution, increased in numbers. The Bishops of Ireland soon perceived the important advantages, which their respective dioceses would derive, were similar institutions established throughout the kingdom. By their desire, the holy Abbess therefore visited each of the principal parts of the kingdom, and, as an opportunity offered, introduced into each place the practice of her institute.

While she was thus employed in a part of the territory of Connaught, a deputation arrived from Leinster, the object of which was to solicit the Saint, to take up her residence in the latter province. It was in Leinster, that the family of the Saint resided: it was there, too, that she had passed her youth; and for these reasons, the deputies maintained, that no place should be preferred by her to that province.

Among the members of the deputation, there were many, who held a respectable rank in society. To this claim on the attention of the Saint, others of them added the still more powerful inducement of an intimate friendship with her. The deputies urged their request with persevering earnestness, and the Saint, encouraged by the hopes which they held forth, of the many spiritual advantages that a compliance with their petition would be attended with, consented at length to the proposal.

On her arrival in Leinster, the inhabitants received the Saint with every demonstration of joy and profound respect. The site, where the town of Kildare now stands, appearing to be well adapted for a religious institution, the Saint and her companions took up their abode there. To the place set apart for the new establishment, some land was annexed, which was also assigned over for the benefit of the institution. This donation, indeed, contributed to supply the wants of the community; but still the pious Sisterhood depended principally for their support, on the liberality of their benefactors. Straitened, however, as were their means of subsistence, the holy Abbess contrived to reserve a liberal proportion, for the relief of the neighbouring poor. And when the wants of the indigent were too pressing for the slender fund at her disposal, she hesitated not, to give up for their relief the moveable property of the institution under her care. On one occasion, when the distress of the poor was more than ordinarily grievous, the Saint, imitating the enlightened piety of St. Ambrose, disposed of some of the sacred vestments, that she might procure the means of supplying their necessities.

The fame of her unbounded charity drew multitudes of the poor to the neighbourhood of Kildare, and motives of piety attracted thither many persons of distinction also, who

were anxious to solicit the prayers of the Saint, or to profit by her edifying example. At length the number of those who visited the Convent so much increased, that it became necessary, to provide accommodations for them in the vicinity of the establishment. To this circumstance, the town of Kildare is indebted for its origin.

The spiritual exigencies of the members of her own institution, and of the numerous strangers who resorted to its vicinity, suggested to St. Brigid the expediency of procuring an Episcopal See to be established at Kildare. Her representations on this subject were immediately attended to by the Prelates, to whom the consideration of so important a proposal belonged. At her desire, Conlath, a recluse of eminent sanctity, who had become illustrious, by the extraordinary things which God had accomplished through his prayers, was chosen as the first Bishop of the newly erected diocess. In progress of time, this diocess became the ecclesiastical metropolis of the province to which it belonged.* This great pre-eminence it acquired, probably on account of the general desire to honour the place where St. Brigid had so long resided. Over the convents of St. Brigid, which were established throughout the kingdom, a special jurisdiction is said to have been exercised by Conlath and his successors in the See of Kildare. On this point, however, the evidence supplied by our historians is by no means of a conclusive character. From the statements which they advance, this inference only can be deduced, that the Bishop of Kildare, in virtue of his dignity of Metropolitan, was charged in a particular manner with the care of the Brigitine Convents which were established in different parts of the province of Leinster.

The desire of the holy Abbess, that a Bishop should

* Cogitosus. Vit. S. Brigid.

reside permanently at Kildare, being now happily accomplished, the Saint applied herself with renewed zeal to the care of the community; over which she immediately presided. Having devoted a long life to the faithful practice of the most exalted virtues, her corporal infirmities admonished the holy Virgin, that the hour of her dissolution was at hand. The Saint had at this time reached the seventieth year of her age. The lengthened interval of half a century had now elapsed, since she first devoted herself to the obligations of the religious state. During that protracted term, the institute which she had founded was diffused throughout the kingdom, and contributed greatly to advance the cause of religion in the districts where it was established. The remembrance of the services which she had thus rendered to the best interests of her native land, cheered and consoled the holy Virgin amidst the sufferings inseparable from old age. Her last illness was soothed by the presence of Nennidh, a Priest of eminent sanctity, over whose youth St. Brigid had watched with parental solicitude. Having received the holy communion from the hands of this venerable man, the Saint breathed forth her last, and was interred in the church adjoining her convent at Kildare.

Among the Irish people the memory of St. Brigid has been ever cherished with extraordinary veneration. In the neighbouring kingdoms of England and Scotland, a foreign writer assures us, that next to the Virgin Mother of the Redeemer, Brigid was held beyond all other Saints in the greatest veneration.* In every part of these countries, oratories were consecrated to God under the patronage of her name, and her intercession supplicated with a holy emulation by the inhabitants. In Ireland, the religious order

* Hector Boethius (Hist. Scot. L. 9).

which St. Brigid founded, continued to flourish for centuries after her decease, and was for many ages the only institute, which was followed by the pious females of that kingdom.*

For a long time the mortal remains of the Saint were honoured with a splendid shrine, which was raised near the altar of the Church, where they were deposited. At length in the ninth century, when the ravages of the Danes had rendered the country desolate, the relicks of the holy Virgin, that they might be secured from irreverence, were placed in the same grave with those of the venerated Apostle of Ireland. Thither, in a short time after, the body of St. Columba was also conveyed and deposited together with the sacred remains of St. Patrick and St. Brigid.

The history of the religious institutions, which were introduced into Ireland after the English invasion, does not come within the limits of the present narrative. It suffices here to remark, that in the few years that elapsed from the invasion until the commencement of the thirteenth century, the principal English and Norman Noblemen who settled in Ireland, laboured to atone for the injuries which they had inflicted on the natives, by erecting religious establishments in different parts of the kingdom.†

* Ware, Harris, and other writers speak of a fire which was, they state, kept always burning in an enclosure near the Monastery of Kildare. Doctor Lanigan rejects this statement, and asserts that there is no mention of any such practice as that here referred to, in any of the Lives of St. Brigid, or in the very many old documents, in which her transactions are spoken of: Giraldus Cambrensis was the first who made mention of it.

† In 1194, Strongbow founded a Priory at Kilmainham for the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. Five other houses of this order were erected in different parts of Ireland towards the close of the twelfth century. About the same time, four Convents of the Trinitarian order were founded: one at Kells, by De Lacy, Lord of Meath; a second at Dundalk, by Bertram De Vernon; a third at Down, by De Courcy, Earl of Ulster; and a fourth at Kilkenny West, by a

CHAPTER VII.

Ministery and Government of the Irish Church maintained and regulated by the rules which the Catholic Church follows—Paschal Controversy—Jurisdiction of the Roman Pontiff over the Primitive Church of Ireland, &c.—Constant Communion of the Irish Church with the Apostolick See.

To the inquiry respecting the form of Government, which was fixed by the Saviour for the Christian church, the controversies of modern times have added peculiar importance. That the commission to preach the Gospel and to administer the sacred rites of the new dispensation, was

person named Tyrrell. This order seems to have been introduced into Ireland, in the year 1188, by De Palmer, a Dane who then founded the Priory of St. John the Baptist, in Dublin. Five houses of the Benedictine institute were founded in the latter part of the twelfth century, chiefly by the Anglo-Norman settlers. These were the first Benedictine Convents that were established in Ireland. The religious institutes of the Canons Regular, and of the Cistercians, which had been established in Ireland before the invasion, received also considerable support from many of the Noble Families, who in the twelfth century fixed their abode in that kingdom. It may be here observed, that as the Canons Regular were not established until the eleventh century, Alemand and Harris were in error, in classing so many of the ancient Irish monasteries under the head of Canons Regular of St. Augustine. In his treatise on Canon Law, Gibert speaks thus on the institution of Canons Regular—"Tantum Seculo XI. visi sunt primum Canonici regulares, sic vocati, quia religiosorum vota faciebant, et ea vitæ clericali adjiciebant."—Vide Lanigan's history, Vol. 1, p. 188. I may here also add, that, as after the English invasion, the Bishops and Abbots of Ireland were obliged to hold their lands *in capite* from the Crown, they thus acquired the privilege of being Lords of Parliament. Sixteen Abbots and twelve Priors had seats in Parliament, in right of their landed possessions.

confided by the Redeemer only to a certain class of his followers, and not to all Christians without distinction, is indeed clearly laid down in the inspired writings. On this point, therefore, the various Christian communities diffused throughout the universe are generally agreed. But on the nature of the ministry which was first imparted to the Apostles, and on the mode in which the Christian Hierarchy was to be supplied in succeeding ages, much dissent has prevailed, more particularly since the era of the Reformation.

Of the reformed churches, while some have retained a form of Hierarchy, in which the powers of the sacred ministry are supposed to be conferred by the imposition of the Bishop's hands, others have maintained, that the institution of Episcopacy is not of divine origin, and consequently, that to become a Christian pastor, Episcopal ordination is by no means necessary. To supply the want of a rite so generally adopted throughout the universe, the advocates of the latter doctrine have assigned to a body called the Presbytery the performance of the ceremony, by which the candidate for the sacred ministry is to be qualified for the duties of his calling. With another and perhaps not less numerous class of Protestants, every species of external ordination is deemed entirely superfluous, and the wish alone of the humblest believer to preach the Gospel, suffices to authorize him, to assume the character of a Christian teacher.

According to the discipline of the Catholic church, the spiritual care of the faithful in each diocess is confided to a Bishop, who must be connected by legitimate consecration with the first pastors, appointed by Jesus Christ. To the Bishop, when canonically charged with the government of a diocess, it belongs, to provide the other inferior pastors, whose services may be required by the faithful entrusted to

his care. In the principles of Catholic doctrine, the duties of the sacred ministry can be discharged, only by the Pastor, who has received the powers of the Priesthood by the imposition of the Bishop's hands. Without this rite no piety, however conspicuous, and no talents, however sublime, can, in the belief of Catholics, entitle any person to arrogate to himself the authority of a Christian Pastor.

But besides the ordinances, which the Catholic church holds to have been prescribed by her Divine Founder, as the medium for imparting to the Bishop and to the Priest, the powers requisite for their respective functions, there are others also, which she regards as indispensable, for the maintainance of a due subordination in the members of her hierarchy. On the ordinances first mentioned, which relate to the consecration of her ministers, the apostolicity of her hierarchy mainly rests; on the latter, which are designed to enforce subordination, the good government and welfare of the Church entirely depends. Thus, by the admirable economy, which in the principles of the Catholic church, regulates the sacred ministry, every part of the mystic body of Christ is bound together in unity, and strength and beauty added by this order to the entire system. While the Bishop of each diocess presides over his Clergy and people, and enforces the practice of their several obligations, he in his turn, is bound to receive with respect the advice of his Metropolitan. To the superior authority of the Roman Pontiff, the Successor of St. Peter, the head of the Apostolick College, the Metropolitan and the Suffragan are required to yield respect and obedience.

From the earliest history of the Christian church, it appears, that the more important regulations concerning religion were usually determined, on occasions when the Clergy were convened together in council. To the ordinance, which

was thus proposed, the presence of their pastors imparted, in the minds of the faithful, a solemnity and an importance, which contributed to secure a ready obedience to the enactment. Of these assemblies of the Clergy, the appellation was different, according to the extent of jurisdiction which belonged to them. To the diocesan assembly, which the Bishop and the Clergy of one diocess only attended, the regulation of those disciplinary matters belonged, which appertained to the faithful under their care. From the several Clergymen, who composed this assembly, the Bishop inquired particularly into the state of religion in every part of his diocess. Were the publick offices of the Church frequented by the people confided to their charge? Did the faithful approach the Sacraments with becoming assiduity and reverence? Were there among their people any publick transgressors of the laws of God, or of the ordinances of the Church? On these and such other important subjects, the Bishop was careful to inform himself, before he dismissed his Clergy.

But the duty of the Bishop did not terminate here. It belonged to him, to inquire not only into the conduct of the laity, but also into that of his Clergy, and to assure himself, that these had discharged with fidelity the sacred functions of their order. When these various inquiries had been concluded, it then remained for the Bishop, to apply a suitable remedy to the evils, which he found to exist in any part of his diocess, and to propose such measures, as would prevent their recurrence. If a just cause appeared to exist, for objecting against any of the proposed enactments, it was the privilege of the Clergy, to direct the Bishop's attention to the subject of complaint, and to assign their reasons for opposing the introduction of the projected regulation. Having listened to their remon-

strance, and deliberated on the justness of their reasons, it belonged to the Bishop to determine, whether he should still persist in enforcing his ordinance, or yield to the representations of his Clergy. In his final decision on the point at issue, it was the duty of the Clergy respectfully to acquiesce.

To the provincial assembly of the Clergy were invited all the Suffragans of the Metropolitan, by whom the Synod was convened. At this council, those Clergymen of the Province also attended, whose learning and experience enabled them in the opinion of the Prelates, to assist with advantage at the deliberations of such an assembly. At the provincial Synod, the state of every diocess, situated within the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan, was made known by each Prelate to his brethren. Before this tribunal, the Clerk, or the Layman, who thought himself aggrieved by the oppressive conduct of his Bishop, might prefer his complaint, and obtain the redress, to which he was entitled. In every part of the national church, the decisions of this tribunal on doctrine or on discipline were respectfully referred to, and served oftentimes to direct the conduct of the Clergy in the other provinces of the kingdom. But in the province itself, where the Synod was celebrated, the disciplinary ordinances which that tribunal enacted, were strictly obligatory.

To either of the assemblies that have been just now described, the national Council was superior in dignity and authority. The right of convoking a national council belonged ordinarily to the Metropolitan, who was invested with the honour of the Primacy. At stated intervals, or when any emergency demanded it, the Primate of each national church convened together all those, who, by station, or by privilege, were entitled to be present at the national Synod. From the manner of proceeding, which was

followed in the provincial council, that observed by the national Synod scarcely differed. The jurisdiction of this latter tribunal was indeed more extensive, and reached to every part of the national church. Before, however, the ordinances of any of these assemblies were entitled to obedience, it was necessary, that the regulations should have been enacted according to the manner, which the general Canons of the Church prescribed. Were the formalities neglected, which the Canon Law ordered to be observed, or were the decrees that emanated from these councils disapproved of by the Roman Pontiff; in these cases, the persons adverse to such enactments might, in many instances, successfully evade a compliance with the laws of the tribunals, of which we have now spoken. To the authority of a national council, and to the decision of such an assembly on a question of faith or morals, the greatest attention was paid in every part of the Christian church. It was by the decisions of national councils, that, at different periods of the church, some of the most important controversies were decided, and the attention of the faithful awakened to the artifices of innovators.

That the government of the Irish Church was regulated according to the system, traced out in the preceding narrative, the history of several of the principal events, that are recorded in her annals abundantly demonstrates. On the invasion of Ireland by Henry the Second, the policy of that monarch prompted him, to encourage the Clergy to meet together in Synods, that by their enactments regarding discipline, the plea on which he invaded the kingdom might be rendered specious. At the provincial Synod, which was held at that period, and which was presided over by an Englishman, whom Henry had preferred to the See of Dublin, every proceeding was, we must believe, conducted

according to the received usage of the English church on similar occasions. That this usage agreed, in every material point, with that previously adopted in Ireland appears certain. Had there been, on this occasion, any important deviation from the established customs, by which a provincial Synod was regulated in Ireland, the feelings of the Irish Clergy were then too much excited against the English ecclesiasticks, to have passed it over in silence. Previously to the English invasion, Irish ecclesiastical history makes mention of different other Synods which were celebrated in this country, and which appears, from various circumstances connected with them, to have been guided and controlled by the rules, laid down in the commencement of the present chapter. Over some of these Synods, we find, that either a Legate, who was sent from Rome for the occasion, or the Apostolick Legate then resident in Ireland, presided. The mode of conducting the proceedings of the councils, at which the one or the other of these Dignitaries attended, was doubtless conformable to the rules laid down by the Canon law and the received usages of the other churches, that were united in Communion with the See of Rome.

The Apostolick Legate who happened to reside in Ireland, or a Legate specially deputed from Rome, presided, it has been stated, at some of the principal councils, which were celebrated in Ireland. The precedency, with which the Legates were honoured, beyond the other dignitaries, who were also present at these councils, naturally leads us to inquire, whether the distinction conferred on them is to be ascribed to their own personal merit, or rather to the doctrine, which the Irish Church professed, regarding the Supremacy of the Roman Pontiff, whom they represented.

According to the doctrine of the Catholic church, the primacy of honour and jurisdiction over the entire body

of the faithful, was confided by Jesus Christ to St. Peter. In support of this doctrine, Catholics refer to the several passages in the sacred writings, from which their belief may be legitimately deduced. In addition to the other indications, which the Saviour employed, in order to show, that he had elected Peter to the chief government of his Church, he honoured this Apostle with an appellation, the most expressive both of the pre-eminence and of the enduring nature of that dignity: "Thou," said the Redeemer, addressing himself to the Apostle, "art Peter," (a name which signifies a rock) "and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound in Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in Heaven."* To this sacred promise, the Redeemer affixed his final sanction, before he ascended into Heaven. After his resurrection, when he manifested himself, for the third time to his disciples, then it was, that he solemnly ratified the announcement contained in the preceding words. "When, therefore, they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter: Simon, Son of John, lovest thou me more than these? He saith to him: Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith to him: Feed my lambs. He saith to him again: Simon, Son of John, lovest thou me? He saith to him: Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith to him: Feed my lambs. He saith to him, the third time: Simon, Son of John, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved, because he had said to him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said to him: Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He said to him: Feed my sheep."†

* St. Matt. Chap. 16. † St. John. Chap. 21.

The important trust, of providing for the spiritual wants of the lambs and the sheep—the entire flock of Jesus Christ—could not, it is manifest, be efficiently administered, unless the pastor, who was honoured with so exalted a commission, were at the same time, invested with the authoritative controul of all those, who were thus confided to his charge. The dignity conferred upon St. Peter, Catholics believe, to have been permanently instituted by the Saviour, for the good government of the Christian church. Such an authority, if expedient even in the times of the Apostles, the Divine Founder of the Church foresaw, would, in after ages, be indispensably necessary, to maintain peace and unity among his followers. To the lawful successor and representative of St. Peter, the Prerogatives of that Apostle were therefore transmitted.

With every other portion of the Catholic Church, the Church of Ireland, from her earliest infancy, acknowledged the authority of the Roman Pontiff, the legitimate heir of the First Chief Pastor of the faithful. In the ecclesiastical annals of Ireland, we may discover many clear indications, that this doctrine was professed by the Irish church, in every age from the time of St. Patrick. The several arguments, wich show that the mission of Patrick was sanctioned by the Apostolick See, have been already touched upon. To search in the history of the Irish Church for evidence, to prove, that the connexion thus formed between Ireland and the See of Rome was afterwards renounced, would be an unprofitable labour. That history, on the contrary, supplies numerous proofs of the high veneration, which the Irish people always entertained for the Chief Pastor of the Catholic church.

In the number of our most ancient ecclesiastical documents, the canons of St. Patrick may be referred to, as containing the most satisfactory attestations, upon the doc-

trine and discipline of the Irish church. From these venerable monuments of primitive Christianity in Ireland, I shall select, at present, the canons, that relate to the maintenance of religious unity. To the preservation of "the unity of spirit in the bond of peace," the early pastors of the Irish church directed their most earnest solicitude. They recommended the maintenance of this holy concord, by pointing the attention of their converts to the example of the First Christians; and they enforced their instructions on this head, with all the earnestness and authority which they could employ. Taught by experience, and by the history of past ages, they knew, that "after their departure, perverse men would arise," whose obstinate attachment to their own conceits would disturb the religious peace of their brethren. With becoming wisdom, they therefore resolved, to remedy the evil, which they feared they could not wholly prevent; and in conformity with the usage of every other portion of the Catholic church, they ordained, that all difficult questions should be referred to the decision of the Apostolick See of Rome.* The prerogative, which the first founders of the Irish church thus recognized in the Apostolick See, obviously implied, that they also admitted in the Roman Pontiff the authority, requisite to enable him, to pronounce a definitive judgment on the questions, which they submitted to his determination. Neither can it be said that the ordinance thus framed by the first pastors of Christianity in Ireland limits the power of the Roman Pontiff, to the decision of such matters only, as were deemed to be of a secondary and inferior importance. On the contrary, the canon here referred to expressly enjoins, that, all difficult

*"Ut si causæ fuerient majores, juxta decretum Synodicum ad caput urbium sint referendæ." Cummian Paschal Ep. "Si quæ quæstiones in hac insula oriantur, ad sedem Apostolicam referantur"—one of the Canons ascribed to St. Patrick. Ware, Opusc. p. 41. Usher, Discourse on Religion, C. 8.

questions—without distinguishing whether these questions relate to doctrine or to discipline—should be decided upon by the supreme tribunal, of which it makes mention. The care, with which the Pastors of the Irish church attended to this injunction of their predecessors, is evinced, by the conduct of the illustrious St. Columban respecting the Paschal controversy.

The history of St. Columban's establishments at Fontaines and Luxeu has been already recited. The number of Columbanus' disciples, the lustre of his virtues, and the splendour of his miracles, had fixed the general attention on this distinguished ecclesiastick. The more exalted the reputation of any individual, the more is suspicion excited, by any appearance of singularity in the opinions, or in the line of conduct, which he adopts. It happened thus to St. Columban. His extraordinary piety attracted the admiration of his contemporaries; but his deviation from the mode of keeping Easter, which was then almost every where received, excited the surprise, and provoked at length the censure of the Gallican Prelates.

The deviation complained of, was not, however, one that was peculiar to St. Columban only. The usage, which this holy man followed, in the celebration of Easter, he had learned from teachers, whom he regarded with veneration, and to whom it had been transmitted by their own Sainted predecessors. To renounce an observance hallowed by such endearing recollections, would, Columban thought, reproach the wisdom, and dishonour the memory of the venerated pastors, by whom he had been formed to the practice of Evangelical perfection.

Besides the influence which this consideration had upon him, Columbanus was also aware, that the question regarding the time for celebrating Easter, was one, which, in truth,

related to discipline only, and which had no necessary connexion with doctrine. It could not, he, therefore, felt persuaded, be unlawful for him, to retain a rite, which, while not opposed to faith, was so strongly recommended to him. But these reasons, convincing as they might be, in his own judgment, would, he knew, have but little weight with the Gallican Bishops. These Prelates were dissatisfied, that a stranger, by his persevering adherence to an obsolete and rejected computation, should revive the same dissensions, which had, for a lengthened period, agitated the peace of Christendom, and which, the solemn decisions already so often pronounced, they were led to hope, had consigned for ever to repose.

An appeal to the Superior authority of the Roman Pontiff was, then, in the judgment of Columbanus, the only resource left, to which he could resort with any hope of success. Had Columbanus, or his opponents, been educated in the school of modern polemicks, a very different course would have been adopted by him. If this illustrious man had not been educated in the belief, that to the Successor of Peter in the Apostolick See of Rome, the care of the entire flock of Christ belonged, assuredly, he, who defended with so much warmth the disciplinary observance of the Irish church regarding Easter, would not have compromised the independence of her hierarchy, by submitting the controversy he was engaged in, to the decision of a foreign Prelate.

Gregory, whom posterity has honoured with the epithet of "the Great," then filled the papal chair. To this Pontiff, Columban addressed a letter, in which he explained the reasons, that induced him to adhere to the traditionary discipline of the Irish church, and in which he requested, that the Pope would terminate the controversy, by pronouncing

a final decision upon the point at issue. By some accident the letter of the Abbot never reached the Pontiff, and, in consequence, Gregory pronounced no decision on the question.

The departure of Columban from the general usage respecting the celebration of Easter, being still unsupported by the authority to which he had himself appealed, a Synod was convened in France, to deliberate on the measures, which were to be adopted, in order to enforce the decree that had been already pronounced. To calm the excited feelings of the Prelates, who were indignant, that a stranger should persist in disturbing the uniformity which they wished to establish, Columban addressed a letter to the Synod. In this letter, he refers to his epistle to Pope Gregory, for an explanation of the reasons, that induced him to decline conforming to the decision of the French Bishops upon the controversy, which was then debated. The Bishops, notwithstanding his remonstrance, were still greatly dissatisfied with his conduct.

Columban, a second time, addressed himself to the Roman Pontiff, requesting, that the Pope would grant him permission to adhere to the usage, which he had been taught by the Pastors of the Irish church. To influence the Pope in his favour, Columban reminded the Pontiff, that Anicetus and Polycarp had lived together in unity, notwithstanding, that they, too, differed on a question, similar to that which was now under consideration. Before, however, the controversy could be appeased by the interference of the Pope, Columban was forced by the persecution of Queen Brumechild, to retire from France, and the Gallican Prelates were thus relieved from the trouble, which his conduct had occasioned them.

The evidence already adduced upon the sentiments which the Irish Clergy entertained, respecting the supremacy

of St. Peter's successor, may be further illustrated, by referring to the letter of St. Columbanus on the celebrated question of the Three Chapters. The honourable appellations of "Most illustrious Head of all the churches of all Europe," of "Most exalted Prelate," and of "Pastor of Pastors," are those, which the Saint employs in the last mentioned epistle, to designate the Roman Pontiff. It is his glory, Columbanus declares, on this occasion, that he belongs to a church which, though placed at the extremity of the earth, never admitted any error contrary to the doctrine of the Gospel, or of the Apostles. "For," says he, "among the Irish, there is no Jew, no heretic, no schismatic; but the Catholic faith, such as it was delivered, by the predecessors of your Holiness, continues unshaken among them. For, we are bound to the Chair of Peter: it is that Chair, which renders Rome, otherwise, indeed, great, eminent and illustrious with us. By the Apostles, Peter and Paul, you are become almost celestial, and Rome is the Head of the universe and of all Churches."*

* The passage here adduced demonstrates, that, neither Pelagianism nor any other heresy had ever corrupted the purity of the Christian faith in Ireland. For, with so important a circumstance, Columbanus could not have been unacquainted. Had Columbanus the least reason to entertain a doubt of the accuracy of his assertion, it is not possible, that, in an epistle, which he knew must have attracted a good deal of publick attention, he could have ventured to speak so confidently as he does, in the passage which is referred to here. Indeed, had Pelagianism ever prevailed among the professors of Christianity in Ireland, some mention of it would doubtless occur in the numerous Canons, which the Pastors of the Irish church enacted. And yet, they are wholly silent on the subject. I may here, also, remark, that the lines already quoted (p. 69) from St. Prosper, prove, that Pelagius was a native of Britain. That he was not a Monk of the Irish Monastery at Bangor, is not less certain, because this Monastery was not founded for more than a century after the time of Pelagius. Pelagius broached his heresy at Rome, A. D. 405. The foundation of the Monastery at Bangor is assigned by Ware, Harris, and Archdall, to A. D. 555; by Usher, to the same year, or to A. D. 559; by the Annals of Innisfallen, to A. D. 558; and by the Four Masters, to A. D. 552. Doctor Lanigan assigns it to the year 559.

The Paschal controversy had begun, about the time of Columbanus, to excite attention in Ireland also. The zeal of Dagan, an Irish Bishop, to uphold the rite of keeping Easter, which he had learned from his predecessors, made him resolve, not to abandon without mature deliberation, the usage, which they had sanctioned. To satisfy his anxiety on this subject, he sailed to Britain, in order to consult upon it with St. Laurence, who had been recently appointed to the government of the English church. But he soon found, that Laurence was too steadfastly attached to the Roman rite, to pay any deference to the reasons, which he assigned for adhering to a different usage. Disappointed in his expectations, Dagan returned home, still more uneasy than he had been before his interview with the English Primate. The Primate, on the other hand, provoked at Dagan's opposition to the usage, which now almost every where prevailed, addressed a letter to the Irish Clergy, in which he complained of the conduct of Dagan, and exhorted them to reform their mistaken mode of celebrating the Christian Passover. The letter of Laurence produced a considerable sensation in Ireland. Of the clergy, some were willing to adopt the Paschal system, which was then generally received throughout the churches of the West, while others violently opposed its introduction into Ireland.

While they were thus divided in opinion, a letter upon the question at issue between them was received from Pope Honorius. A Synod was, in consequence, immediately convened, and the merits of the different systems respecting the observance of Easter carefully examined. The support of their cause, the advocates of the Roman usage committed to Saint Laserian. To the tried zeal of Fintan, the defence of the Irish rite was confided. The more experienced Clergy who assisted at this assembly, imparted carefully to

their younger brethren in the sacred ministry, the instructions which they had themselves received from their predecessors—those venerable men, who had been the disciples of the first teachers of Christianity in Ireland. "We," said they, "have been charged by our own predecessors, to receive with humility and without hesitation, whatever salutary and approved institutes are brought to us, from the fountain of our baptism, and of our wisdom, and from the successors of the Apostles; it is, therefore, our desire, that the festival of Easter be observed, after the custom of the Universal Church."

The advice was approved of by the entire assembly. For the greater satisfaction, however, of all who were concerned in the subject under consideration, the Synod resolved, that, in conformity with the canon, to which allusion has been already made, the controversy should be composed, "by referring it to the head of cities." For this purpose it was agreed, "that some wise and humble persons should be sent to Rome, as children to their mother."

The deputies chosen on this occasion, accomplished in a short time the commission with which they were entrusted. On their return home, they announced to their brethren, that the Roman method for celebrating Easter was recommended, by the approbation of the Universal Church. Miracles, we are told, confirmed the exhortations, which the delegates employed, to overcome the obstinacy of those, who were still adverse to the proposed change. After this event, the Irish nation, for the most part, adopted the discipline, which the deputies recommended.

The conspicuous part, which Cummian had taken in the introduction of the modern discipline, gave offence to his brethren in the monastery of Hy, who steadfastly adhered to the ancient rite of the Irish church respecting Easter.

To appease their anger, he addressed to their Abbot Segienus, his well known epistle on the Paschal Controversy. From the writings of the ancient Fathers, especially from those of St. Cyprian, Cummian derived the arguments, by which he refuted the charges that were preferred against him. "Can," continues the learned Abbot, "any thing more pernicious to the Mother Church be conceived, than to say, Rome errs; the whole world errs: the Scots and Britains alone are right."

To introduce uniformity into the observance of Easter, throughout the province subject to his spiritual care, Thomian, Archbishop of Armagh, together with the principal Clergy of the North, wrote also to Rome, in order to learn, how they were to proceed, in the peculiar circumstances in which they were then placed: for the abettors of the Irish rite regarding Easter were more numerous and more obstinate in the North, than in the other provinces of the kingdom. The Chair of St. Peter being at this time vacant, by the death of Pope Severinus, Hilarius, the Archpriest of Rome, John, the Pope elect, and John, Counsellor of the Apostolick See, replied to their epistle. From the answer returned on this occasion, it appears, that the Roman Clergy, led astray by an incorrect representation, which they had received, confounded the Irish rite respecting the Paschal solemnity, with the wholly different and prescribed system of the Quartodecimans. In the letter, which the Roman Clergy addressed on the same occasion to the Primate, mention is also made of an attempt, which was made, they had heard, by some innovators, to revive the Pelagian heresy in Ireland. What foundation they had for their observations, does not appear at the present day. The ancient records of the Irish church are entirely silent on the subject: nor is there even any probable reason to suppose, that the

pernicious principles of Pelagius were ever maintained by any congregation of Irish Christians.

The extraordinary veneration, which the Irish nation cherished for the Apostolick See, in every age, since the conversion of that people to the Gospel, is evinced by the testimonies that have been already adduced. From these testimonies, it appears, that, from the earliest ages, the pastors and the people of the Irish church reverenced the See of Rome, as the parent of their Christianity, and as the depository of the exalted prerogatives, which were conferred by Jesus Christ upon St. Peter. The illustrious Episcopal Sees, which were placed in those parts of Europe, that were more conveniently situated with regard to Ireland than Rome was, would, occasionally, at least, have been appealed to, to decide on the controversies that occurred in the Irish church, if the pastors of this church were not persuaded, that the chair of Peter possessed a pre-eminence of jurisdiction, to which no other church was entitled.

The Monks of Hy, it has been stated, adhered, with an unyielding tenacity, to the rite of the Irish Church, respecting the Paschal solemnity. The reverence, which they entertained for the usages of St. Columbkill, caused them to regard, with abhorrence, every deviation from these observances.

In the number of such usages, they computed the rite, which Columban followed, in celebrating the Christian Passover. "Nor was the zeal of Columba's Monks for their master's reputation, content with enforcing this usage in the monastery of Hy only. In every country where they obtained a settlement, they laboured to establish the same practice also.

The kingdom of Northumbria owed the conversion of its inhabitants to the zeal of Aidan, a monk, who had gone

thither from the monastery of Hy. With the knowledge of the Gospel, the Northumbrians received the peculiar rite, which their Apostle observed in the celebration of Easter. Wilfrid, the preceptor of Alchfrid, who was heir to the Sceptre of Northumbria, informed his royal pupil, that the Paschal rite, which the Northumbrians followed, differed from that which was in use among all the principal churches of the West. The announcement of Wilfrid was soon conveyed to Oswin, the Father of Alchfrid. To Oswin, the circumstance appeared important enough, to demand an immediate inquiry. By order of the King, a conference was therefore held upon it, at the monastery of Whitby.

On the appointed day, Colman, a Monk of Hy, and Wilfrid, appeared at Whitby,* to support their respective claims to the royal approbation. The King, in person, opened the conference, by remarking, that united together as they all were, in the service of the same God, and expecting, as they did, hereafter, the enjoyment of the same Heaven, they ought to follow the same observances. When Oswin had concluded, Colman arose. The Paschal rite, which, with his brethren at Hy, he had adopted, Colman endeavoured to defend, by the authority of St. John, and of his own predecessors—"all holy men and beloved of God." To the authority of St. Columba, on which Colman also greatly relied for the vindication of his cause, Wilfrid opposed the practice of Rome, "where Peter and Paul taught the doctrine of the Gospel, and sealed their testimony with their blood." As to St. John, Wilfrid remarked, that, according to the usage which that Saint followed, no attention was to be paid to the day of the week, on which the Paschal festival occurred; while in Colman's system, the Christian Passover should be solemnized on Sunday. That wisdom,

* This conference was held at Whitby, A. D. 664.

Wilfrid continued, deserves to be contemned, which would prefer the opinion of a few, confined to a corner of the earth, however illustrious these might be for sanctity, to the practice of the Universal Church. "Could," he asked, "Columba be preferred to the most blessed Prince of the Apostles, to whom the Lord had said: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it; and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven." Here the King interrupted Wilfrid, and demanded of Colman, if the Lord had spoken thus to Peter. Colman admitted that he had. "You are then," continued the King, "both agreed, that this has been said principally to Peter, and that the Lord has given to him the keys of the kingdom of Heaven." Undoubtedly, was the universal reply. "Then, I tell you," concluded Oswin, "that this is the Gate-keeper whom I will not contradict, lest on my arrival at the gate of the kingdom of Heaven, there should be no one to open it for me—as he who holds the keys would be against me." Thus the cause of Wilfrid was pronounced victorious, and the controversy finally determined.

To examine the accuracy of Wilfrid's reasoning, on the point at issue between himself and Colman, would be of no moment in the present controversy. The fact alone, that the early Pastors of the Irish church admitted the Supremacy of St. Peter's Chair, is to be now established. Of that fact, the preceding narrative supplies the most convincing evidence.

Indeed, independently of the direct arguments, which prove, that the superior authority of the Apostolick See was recognised by the Irish church, the same conclusion is also clearly deducible, from the constant communion, which the Irish Clergy maintained with those foreign churches,

which are acknowledged to have been always connected with the Chair of St. Peter. The justness of this observation will the more readily appear, if we call to mind the numerous foreign youth, whom the fame of Ireland for sacred and profane learning drew to her schools. The intercourse thus established between Ireland and the several countries of Europe, was moreover greatly enlarged, by the numbers of learned Irishmen, whose zeal for the diffusion of religion and of letters, induced them to abandon their native land, and fix their abode in foreign regions.

To give even an outline of the many distinguished strangers who visited Ireland for the sake of their own improvement in religion and in letters, or of the numerous Irishmen who travelled to distant countries, in order to communicate to others the blessings, in which their own native Isle abounded, would far exceed the limits of this history. The instances, however, to which I shall advert, will suffice to show, that the creed of the Irish church entirely coincided with that, which was then professed in the principal countries of Europe.

The particular controversy, on the connexion of the Irish church with the See of Rome, will be thus resolved into the general question, respecting the Supremacy of the Successor of St. Peter, and the communion, which every national church is hence obliged to maintain with the Roman Pontiff. The arguments, by which this general question may be determined, do not come within the limits of the present history. For the purpose now contemplated, it suffices to show, that an intimate connexion subsisted between the Irish church and the principal churches of Europe, and that, hence, the arguments, which the history of these churches supplies in favour of the Supremacy of the Apostolick See, are applicable to the controversy, upon the jurisdiction of that See over the primitive church of Ireland.

Scanty as the Irish annals of the seventh century are, they yet record the names of many distinguished Ecclesiasticks, who left their native land, to announce the truths of salvation in distant countries. Besides the names of Vulganius, of Livinus, and Fursæus, we meet also with the name of St. Wiro, who was consecrated Bishop at Rome, and who, after having sojourned for some time in his native country, returned to France, where Pepin chose him for his spiritual director. In the annals of the same century, mention is also made of St. Kieran, who journeyed to Rome, in order to obtain the sanction of the Pope for his mission to Franconia. About the same period, we find the illustrious St. Carthagus, whose School at Lismore was resorted to by numbers of the youth of foreign countries, elevated first to the See of Rachand, and soon after to the more important Bishoprick of Tarentum.

The name of Virgilius, who flourished in the eighth century, deserves on the present occasion to be particularly noticed. Having left his native land for the purpose of engaging in the labours of a foreign mission, Virgil first visited France. Here he was kindly received by Pepin, Son of Charles Martel, who was then Mayor of the Palace. After he had remained two years with this generous Nobleman, he set out for Bavaria, with the view of assisting St. Boniface in the conversion of the inhabitants. Before he had been long settled in that country, a controversy of a serious nature arose between himself and Boniface. The controversy related to the validity of Baptism conferred by a Priest, who, through ignorance of the Latin tongue, recited the form of that Sacrament in such a manner, as seemed to St. Boniface, to impede the valid administration of the sacred rite. The charity of Boniface became alarmed, when he reflected on the spiritual injury, which might arise to

those, on whom the rite had been thus conferred, and he ordered them to be baptized a second time.

But Virgil had learned to distinguish more accurately than Boniface, between the accidental and the essential parts of a Sacrament; and, in his judgment, the corrupt pronunciation of the form did not, in the case at issue, effect the validity of the Baptism. Convinced of the accuracy of his reasoning, Virgil declined to comply with the instructions of Boniface; and he appealed in support of his opinion to the authority of Rome. His appeal was attended to, and the correctness of his decision acknowledged by that tribunal. Some other disputes, on the nature of which contemporary historians are silent, disturbed, for a time, the peace of these holy men. But an end was at length put to these unpleasant controversies, by the Pontiff promoting Virgil to the See of Saltzburgh.*

The eighth century was not less remarkable for the number of Irish ecclesiasticks, who were distinguished in foreign kingdoms for learning and virtue. It was during this century, that Dungal delivered lectures in Italy to a numerous class of disciples, who crowded with eagerness to profit by his instructions. The exertions of Dungal, while he resided at Pavir, to crush the attempt, which Caladius made to revive the errors of the Iconaclasts, obtained for him the esteem of every friend to religion. He successfully vindicated the doctrine of the Catholic church, and showed the conformity of her tenets on the subject then debated, with the writings of the Fathers, the uniform tradition of preceding ages, and the solemn decisions of general Councils.

But while so many distinguished Irishmen were labouring to keep alive the sacred flame of religion and of learning in distant countries, the invasion of the Danes threatened to

extinguish it in their own native land. The persevering resistance of Melseachlin, who obtained the Sceptre of Ireland in the year 846, humbled the pride of the barbarians, and taught them to respect the bravery of the Irish people. The fortune of war being thus turned, the Danes were defeated in different engagements, and their leader, Turgesius, was taken prisoner and consigned to that immediate death, which his own ruthless policy had so often inflicted on his captives. Grateful for the success with which Heaven had blessed his arms, Melseachlin sent ambassadors to Charles, King of France, to form a treaty of friendship with him, and to solicit permission to pass through the French dominions, in the pilgrimage, which he had resolved to make to the tombs of the Apostles.

Notwithstanding the success of Melseachlin, the Danes retained sufficient power, to secure a settlement for themselves, in some parts of the kingdom. But after a short interval, the ferocious spirit of the invaders began to be gradually softened by the mild influence of religion, and many of them consented to embrace the faith and morality of the Gospel. The veneration, which the pastors of the Irish church ever cherished for the successor of St. Peter in the Apostolick See, they were careful to impress on the minds of their Danish converts. The lessons of their teachers were listened to with docility by the Neophytes, and these soon learned to emulate the native Irish, in their reverence for the authority of the Roman Pontiff. Hence, in a short time, after the Danes had settled in Ireland, we find, that while the descendant of the illustrious Brian Boroimhe exchanged at Rome his princely honours for the humility of the cloister, two of the Danish Chieftans undertook also a journey from Ireland to the Apostolick See, in order to perform their devotions in the capital of the Christian world.

The cities of Dublin, Limerick, and Waterford, were those, in which the Danes had established their principal settlements. When these barbarians had been converted to Christianity, they became anxious, that each of the cities under their dominion should be honoured by the residence of a Bishop. Motives of policy, to which their peculiar circumstances gave birth, induced the Danes, to send the Prelates, elected for the new Sees, to receive episcopal consecration from the Metropolitan of Canterbury.

Besides the Primatial dignity of England, Lanfranc enjoyed also the honour, of being the Papal Legate for that kingdom. To him, the petition of the Danish converts of Dublin was presented; and at their desire, the episcopal dignity was conferred by him on the ecclesiastick, who was elected to preside over them. Lanfranc was succeeded both in the Primatial and Legatine offices by Anselm, a Prelate, whose exalted piety has enrolled him in the calender of the Catholic church. In his conduct, towards the Danish converts of Waterford, Anselm followed the example of his predecessor.*

The connexion thus formed between the hierarchy of the English and Irish churches, seemed to St. Anslem to open to him a favourable opportunity, for procuring the reform of certain usages in the Irish church, which he thought prejudicial to the maintenance of ecclesiastical discipline. To accomplish this object, the Saint addressed a letter to the Irish Bishops, in which, after he had commended the purity of their faith, he earnestly exhorted them to enforce with vigour the disciplinary enactments, which were received by the other principal churches of the West.†

* Patrick was consecrated for Dublin, A. D. 1074. Malchus for Waterford, A. D. 1096. Gillebert was, it is probable, already consecrated Bishop, when he was appointed to the See of Limerick: his successor was consecrated at Canterbury.

† According to Usher, (Disc. on Relig.) the connexion between the Archbi-

The exertions of the English Primate were zealously seconded by Gilbert, the Bishop, who then governed the See of Limerick. The earnestness, with which Gilbert supported the exhortations of the Primate, induced St. Anselm, it is conjectured, to recommend him to the Holy See, as a Prelate, to whom the Legatine authority might be advantageously confided, and he was, accordingly, honoured with the appointment of Papal Legate for Ireland.* The important station, which Gilbert now occupied, enabled him to labour with more effect in reforming abuses, and in introducing the disciplinary improvements, which he wished to establish in the Irish church. These salutary changes might, he perceived,

shop of Canterbury and the Sees erected in the Danish cities of Dublin, Waterford, and Limerick, did not commence until after the year 1066. Indeed previously to that year, the Danes were as hostile to the Anglo-Saxons, as they were to the Irish. The circumstances which led to the subjection of these three Sees to the English appear to have been of an entirely political nature, originating in the peculiar situation of the Danes in Ireland. As to the other Irish Sees, there is no instance of the English Primate exercising any jurisdiction over their Bishops. The first attempt on the part of the Archbishop of Canterbury to claim some authority over the Irish church, was made in the Synod of Winchester, A. D. 1072. On the argument in favour of this pretension, which is derived from the Legatine jurisdiction of St. Augustin, it suffices to remark, that such jurisdiction is of a transitory nature, and does not descend necessarily to the successor of a Bishop. Besides, had Augustin's Legatine authority extended to Ireland, he surely would have felt himself bound to interfere, on some occasions, at least, in the concerns of the Irish church: and yet, there is no reason to suppose that he ever did. Indeed his commission extended only over "*all the Bishops of the Britains*:" and these words are applicable to Great Britain alone. Bede uses the word, "*Britannias*" to signify Great Britain alone; and Fleury, L. 36, supposes, that Augustin's authority extended only to the territory, now known by the name of Great Britain. Moreover, the Irish church had always, as Primate, the Archbishop of Armagh; and her records show, that that Metropolitan exercised the Primatial authority on different occasions, in such a manner, as proves, that he held himself responsible to no other Prelate, except the Roman Pontiff only.

* St. Bernard states in his life of St. Malachy, Cap. 7. that Gilbert was the first Legate appointed for Ireland. This alone subverts both the assertion, that St. Augustin's Legatine authority extended to that country, and the inference sought to be deduced from it—namely, that the English Primate possessed a certain authority over the Irish Bishops.

be more easily accomplished, and be rendered also more permanent, if arrangements were made with regard to the number and extent of the Irish Sees, similar to those which were then adopted in other countries. A Synod was accordingly convened at Rath Breasil,* and the proposed arrangements introduced and established by his authority. This important change, as well as the other proceedings of the council, Gilbert sanctioned, by imparting the benediction of St. Peter and his successor to such as should comply with the regulations which were then enacted, while he denounced, at the same time, the heaviest malediction, against the person who would presume to violate these ordinances.

It was reserved, however, for the piety of St. Malachy, to complete the useful undertaking which Gilbert had commenced. That extraordinary man, after he had practised, for a long time, in retirement, the sublimest of the Gospel virtues, and had prepared himself by constant application to ecclesiastical studies for the sacred ministry, was first promoted to the Bishoprick of Down, and afterwards elevated to the Primatial chair of Armagh. While in this high station, the Saint extended his pastoral solicitude to the remotest parts of the kingdom, and affected by means of the influence, which his extraordinary virtue had obtained for him over the minds of his countrymen, the adoption of those canonical regulations, which he desired to establish.

To render these regulations permanent, the Saint was anxious to procure the sanction of the Apostolick See. In order to accomplish that object, and to obtain also the Pallium for the Metropolitans of Armagh and Cashel, St. Malachy resolved to undertake a journey to Rome. The wisdom of the various arrangements, which the Saint had introduced into Ireland, could not fail to secure for them

* Doctor Lanigan, thinks that this Synod was held about the year 1118.

the approbation of the Roman Pontiff. But the Pope was of opinion, that the concession of the Pallium to the Irish Metropolitans should be deferred to a future period.

Christian, Bishop of Lismore, succeeded St. Malachy in the office of Papal Legate for Ireland. During the time that Christian held this important appointment, Cardinal Paparo was sent from Rome to terminate the long pending negociation, respecting the concession of the Pallium to the Metropolitans of Armagh and Cashel. On the arrival of Paparo, a Synod was assembled at Kells,* in which, Dublin and Tuam were advanced to the rank of Metropolitan Sees, and the Pallium conferred on each of the four Archbishops, who were then created in Ireland. After the Legate had confirmed the superior rank and authority of the Primate of Armagh over the other Irish Metropolitans, and had assigned to the Archbishops their respective Suffragans, the Synod concluded its deliberations, and the Legate returned to Rome.

I shall close the present inquiry with the history of St. Laurence O'Toole, the Metropolitan, who governed the See of Dublin at the period of the English invasion. I have reserved for this place the biography of that illustrious Prelate, because, while it contains much that will confirm all that I have advanced regarding the ancient belief of the Irish church, on the supremacy of the Roman Pontiff, it will also contribute to show, how groundless the charges are, which the English writers, who favoured the pretensions of Henry, preferred against the Clergy and the people of Ireland.

The history of St. Laurence is closely interwoven with that of the civil condition of Ireland in the twelfth century. About the middle of that century, Henry the Second, who

* March the 9th, A. D. 1152.

then swayed the British Sceptre, conceived the project of adding the kingdom of Ireland to his hereditary dominions. Fortunately for the accomplishment of his ambitious design, an Englishman, Adrian the Fourth, then filled the Papal chair. Under the pretence of a laudable anxiety for the diffusion of piety among the Irish people, and of effecting a reformation of the abuses, which, it was asserted, dishonoured religion among them, Henry entreated the Pontiff, to transfer the dominion of Ireland to him. Adrian listened willingly to the prayer of the English Monarch, and without delay acceded to his request. For a long time, however, Henry deferred to avail himself of the grant, which the Pope had undertaken to make to him. A favourable opportunity for doing so, at length presented itself.

The profligacy and tyranny of Dermod Mac-Morogh, King of Leinster, had drawn upon him the vengeance of Roderic O'Connor, the Supreme Monarch of Ireland, and he was expelled from his principality. Despairing of obtaining succour from his countrymen, to whom his crimes had rendered him an object of scorn and execration, the unfortunate Prince repaired to Henry, and endeavoured to enlist that Monarch in his interests. Henry gladly profited of the occasion, to prepare for executing the ambitious designs, which he had so long meditated. Under his sanction, a band of Anglo-Norman adventurers accompanied Dermod to Ireland, in order to aid in restoring that Prince to his hereditary throne. In a short time after, Henry himself followed: and, from that period, until the English power was finally established in Ireland, that unhappy country became the theatre of the most sanguinary struggles.

In his youth, St. Laurence had been held in captivity, as a hostage, by Mac-Morogh: Against the Father of the Saint, to whom the Princely honours of Imaly belonged,

Mac-Morogh had long entertained the most hostile feelings. The power of Muriartach—thus St. Laurence's Father was called—not being equal to that of his adversary, he was constrained to bend to the superior force of the King of Leinster, and to surrender his Son, as a hostage, to that Sovereign. The ungenerous Dermod treated the youthful captive (the child was then only ten years old,) with his characteristic cruelty, and sent him in exile to a remote and barren district. The Father, indignant at the harsh usage of his child, seized on twelve of Dermod's soldiers, and threatened them with immediate death, unless his Son were restored to him. Dermod, alarmed for the safety of his men, surrendered the child to the Bishop of Glendaloch, by whom Laurence was delivered in safety to his Parents. In a short time after he had returned home, Laurence professed a desire to engage in the service of the sanctuary, and he was placed under the care of the same Prelate, by whom he had been recently restored to his family.

As he advanced in years, Laurence continued to evince an unceasing ardour for the attainment of the virtues and the learning, which the state of life he had in view demanded. At the age of five-and-twenty, he was chosen Abbot of the Monastery of Glendaloch. The revenues of the Abbey, which were then very considerable, and the ample resource which his Father had bequeathed to him, the young Abbot cheerfully employed in relieving the distress which a famine of four years' continuance had occasioned among the poor of his vicinity. The See of Glendaloch having become vacant, by the death of the Bishop, the Clergy and people desired, that Laurence should be elected to succeed him. The Saint had not then attained the age required by the Canons for the Episcopal dignity, and he gladly availed

himself of the circumstance, to avoid complying with their entreaty.

The splendour of his virtues began, however, by this time, to attract general admiration; and the Metropolitan See of Dublin having become vacant, by the death of Gregory, the first Archbishop of that diocess, Laurence reluctantly acquiesced in the choice, which the electors made of him, and he was consecrated* by Gelasius, who then filled the Primatial dignity in Ireland.

Soon after his accession to the See of Dublin, he prevailed upon the Secular Canons of Christ-church, to adopt the rule which was followed by the Canons regular of the Congregation of Aroasia.† To encourage them in the practice of the austere discipline, which that rule enjoined, the Archbishop himself took the habit of the order, and discharged, with the most edifying exactness, as far as his duties permitted him, all the obligations, which the other members of the institute performed. When the midnight office was recited, and when the other Canons had retired to rest, the holy Prelate oftentimes remained alone in the church, and passed the rest of the night in prayer. As soon as day light returned, it was his custom to close his devotions, by going in procession around the adjoining cemetery, chaunting, as he walked along, the prayers for the faithful departed. Under his Pontifical robes he constantly wore a hair shirt. So austere was his rule of life, that he always abstained from flesh meat; and when, on Fridays, he partook of any refreshment, it consisted of bread and water only. The charity, which he exercised towards the poor, while he was Abbot of Glendaloch, he still continued to practise with unremitting care. Every day, he attended in person, to see

* A. D. 1162.

† Thus called from the Abbey of Aroasia, in the diocess of Arras.

that food was supplied to thirty of them. The number which he daily relieved, was never less than thirty, and sometimes amounted even to sixty. Though he spent each day, in the edifying manner which has been now described, his solicitude for his own perfection induced him, to retire occasionally to his former retreat at Glendaloch, and to devote there, without interruption, some time, to the holy exercises of fasting, prayer, and contemplation. His ardent love for the people confided to his pastoral care, he nobly evinced, during the siege carried on by Strongbow and Dermod against Dublin, in the year 1170. In the carnage which followed the capture of the city, the Saint fearlessly rushed into the midst of the danger, endeavouring to rescue his flock from the fury of the assailants.

But the singular piety, for which this illustrious Saint was distinguished, did not interfere with, or abate his attachment to the cause of his country's independence. He felt intensely, the deep injury which, under the colour of religion, had been inflicted upon Ireland, and he resolved to exert all the influence, which his exalted station, his eminent reputation for superior virtue, and the power, which his illustrious family connexions gave him, to rescue his native land from the domination of a foreign invader. With this view, he lent his aid, to maintain a friendly correspondence between Roderic, the King of Ireland, and Godred, the Sovereign of Mann. The result of this amicable intercourse was, the adoption of a joint enterprise, against Strongbow and his adherents in Dublin.

In virtue of this arrangement, Godred entered the harbour of Dublin, and blockaded it with thirty ships, while Roderic, with a powerful army, invested the city. By this proceeding, Strongbow was reduced to the utmost distress, as every avenue was guarded, by which provisions could be con-

veyed to the forces under his command. The hopes of Laurence for the liberation of his country were now almost consummated, and the lapse of a few days seemed to be alone required, to effect the utter discomfiture of the English party. The soldiers of Roderic, confident of success, looked upon their adversaries with contempt, and imprudently relaxed the vigilance, which would have rendered them successful against a more formidable enemy.

Strongbow soon perceived the dangerous indifference, into which their certainty of triumph had betrayed the Irish forces. Profiting of a favourable opportunity, a chosen and numerous band of the English army sallied forth suddenly from the city. The vigour and unexpectedness of attack threw the besiegers into the utmost confusion: they fled precipitately from before their pursuers, and Roderic himself narrowly escaped being taken prisoner. The ill success of this enterprise appears to have destroyed the hopes, which Laurence had previously entertained, of recovering the independence of Ireland. The Archbishop contented himself, ever after, with endeavouring to obtain the most favourable terms, which his mediation could procure for his unhappy country.

In company with some other Irish Prelates,* the Saint, a few years after the siege of Dublin, proceeded to Rome to assist at the Third General Council of Lateran. On this occasion, he experienced the kindest attention from Alexander the Third, who then filled St. Peter's chair. Before he departed from Rome, the Pontiff took the church of Dublin under his own special protection; confirmed the jurisdiction of its Metropolitan over the Sees of Glendaloch,

* They are said to have been six in number: St. Laurence of Dublin, Catholicus of Tuam, Constantine O'Brien of Killaloe, Felix of Lismore, Augustin of Waterford, and Brictius of Limerick.

Kildare, Ferns, Leighlin, and Ossory; and appointed the Saint his Legate, throughout the kingdom of Ireland.

On the return of the Archbishop to Ireland, he commenced, without delay, to discharge the important trust, which the Pope had confided to him. He evinced particular solicitude, to effect an entire reformation in the conduct of the Clergy, and obliged such of them, as he had found guilty of violating the solemn obligations annexed to the sacred ministry, to journey to Rome, and seek absolution from the Pontiff. The year following that of his return from Rome, was the last of this holy Prelate's earthly career. In that year, he undertook a journey to France, whither Henry had lately gone, in order to terminate some dissensions, which had broken out between that Monarch and Roderic, who was still allowed to retain the title of King of Ireland. Whilst proceeding towards Normandy, the venerable man was seized with a dangerous illness. It happened, that the place, where he became sick, was situated near the monastery of Eu. Thither the Saint repaired, and without delay, prepared himself for death, by devoutly receiving the sacraments of Penance, of the Eucharist, and of Extreme Unction. The violence of the sickness soon hurried him to the tomb.* His remains were interred with great solemnity in the middle of the church of Eu. In some time after, they were transferred to a place, which was prepared for them before the altar of the Martyr Leodegarius, and were finally deposited in a silver shrine, over the high altar, after he had been canonized by Honorius the Third.

The period of the English invasion has been frequently assigned by the adversaries of Catholicity, as that, when through the intervention of foreign influence, the Irish hierarchy was subjected to the authority of the Roman Pontiff,

* St. Laurence died on the fourteenth day of November, A. D. 1180.

Without regard to the positive arguments, by which alone this controversy can be determined, I may remark, that experience shows, that the period, when the civil freedom of a nation is menaced by a foreign enemy, is not that which is the most propitious for inducing those whose liberties are endangered, to adopt the religion of the invaders. At such a crisis, the feelings of a people, when their political independence is at stake, are too much incensed against their oppressors, to consent to any deviation from the religious principles, in which they had been educated. The remembrance of past injuries ever proves a strong barrier against the admission even of the best attested truths; and it is only when the memory of former wrongs has been soothed into forgetfulness, that the understanding of a nation can be appealed to with effect.

Were the political change, which the English invasion brought about in Ireland, accompanied by a corresponding revolution in the religion of the Irish people, some vestige of this extraordinary event would be assuredly found in the historical records of the twelfth century. To search in these, however, for any proof of such an innovation in the religion of the Irish people, would prove an unavailing labour. On the contrary, if we rely on coeval annals, it will appear, that the change occasioned by the invasion related solely to the civil government of the kingdom. In the Synods, held at Cashel and at Dublin, by order of Henry, a few ecclesiastical regulations were indeed made, but they were of a merely disciplinary nature, and such as implied, that there was no discordance in faith between the invaders and the Irish people.

In truth, had any such dissension existed, it must appear inexplicably strange, that the Irish, who submitted so reluctantly to the yoke of a foreign Prince, should have silently

acquiesced in the admission of a religious creed, opposed to that which they had previously professed. The deep interest, which the Irish people ever felt in every thing that related even to the minutest observances of their religion, is evidenced by the warmth, with which the Paschal controversy was debated among them. But, for the decision of the present inquiry, we need recur only to the history of the important events, of which mention has been already made. From the history of these authenticated facts, it has been conclusively shown, that the Irish people, in every age, since their conversion to Christianity, venerated the Roman Pontiff, as the successor of St. Peter, and as the Chief Pastor of the Catholic church.

CHAPTER VIII.

Doctrine of the Irish Church on the Sacraments—On the Real Presence—On the Eucharistic Sacrifice, or the Mass—On Prayers for the Dead, &c.—On the Invocation of Saints—On the respect due to Sacred Images and to the relicks of the Saints, &c. &c.

HAVING described in the preceding pages the form of government of the primitive Irish church, I shall next inquire, what were the distinguishing tenets of the religious creed, which that church professed. If we believe the assertion of certain writers, the creed of the early Christians in Ireland differed widely from that adopted by the Roman church, and by the churches in connexion with Rome. To the arguments adduced by these writers in support of their assertion, I have given all that attention, which the importance of the subject demanded. The result of this attention has been, that, in every instance, I have found even a partial acquaintance with the principles of Catholic theology, sufficient to demonstrate the inconclusiveness of their argumentation. In making this statement, it is not, however, my intention to deny, that, in the ancient ecclesiastical records of the Irish church, expressions may be sometimes found, that favour, by their obscurity, the interpretation, which the advocates of Protestantism would annex

to them. But from detached and unusual passages, the sincere inquirer after religious truth will admit, that no certain inference can be legitimately deduced. Such an inquirer, will, on the contrary, acknowledge, that the faith of the primitive Irish church can be ascertained from those parts only of her history, in which the religious doctrines and practices of her children are described in familiar and explicit language.

In inquiring into the creed of the primitive church of Ireland, it will be also the duty of the person, who desires to proceed impartially in the examination, to distinguish carefully between the received tenets of the Irish church, and those opinions on religious subjects, which, without her sanction, any of her members may have advanced. From those documents only, that attest the faith and discipline, to which the Pastors of the Irish church lent the sanction of their authority, will the candid inquirer after religious truth deduce his conclusions, regarding the creed, which she professed.

To these observations of so much importance in the investigation of the creed, which was formerly professed in Ireland, I shall subjoin another not less deserving of the reader's notice. In the preceding pages, various instances were adduced, of the intercourse, which subsisted, before the English invasion, between the pastors of the Irish church and those of the other principal churches of the West. The names of many Irishmen have been also recited, who discharged the duties of the sacred ministry in several parts of Europe, and who, in reward for their exertions, were promoted to the highest honours of the Christian sanctuary. This promotion was, in many instances, conferred by the Roman Pontiff, the Supreme Pastor of the Catholic church. These facts, it is obvious, cannot be reconciled with the

supposition, that the doctrine of Irish Christianity differed from that, which was professed in the countries, where the missionaries, of whom we now speak, laboured in the cause of religion. Thus, without the toil of a minute investigation, into each of the particular questions, on which Catholics and Protestants are divided, it may be shown, that the faith of the Irish church always accorded with that, which was sanctioned by the approval of the Apostolick See.

To satisfy, however, the anxiety of those, who may desire further proof, that the doctrine which the Catholic church now teaches accorded with the belief of the primitive church of Ireland, I shall touch upon the leading controversies, between the advocates of the Reformation and the professors of Catholicity.*

Of the several parts of the new dispensation, there is none more interesting to the Christian, than that which relates to the institution of the Sacraments. According to the creed of the Catholic church, the Saviour is believed, to

* I may here observe, that Archbishop Usher is the principal writer, who has attempted to show, that the creed of the primitive Irish church agreed with that of the English Reformed Church. The reader, perhaps, will be anxious to learn, how Doctor Usher was induced to engage in so hopeless an undertaking. Actuated by the same spirit, by which so many of his brethren of the present day are guided, Usher resolved on proselytizing the Irish people to the Protestant doctrines. For this purpose, he laboured unceasingly to ingratiate himself with the humbler classes of society. But wheresoever he went, and whomsoever he addressed, he found all his efforts baffled, and all his ingenuity foiled, by the simple reply, which the poor and the rich alike returned, "That they followed the religion of their Ancestors, and would never depart from it." To overcome this difficulty, Usher endeavoured to prove, that the leading tenets of the Reformation were admitted by the early professors of the Gospel in Ireland. But his exertions were wholly unavailing. No sophistry could convince the Irish peasant, that his religion differed from that, in which his Father and Grandfather had lived and died. These (and the assertion is also true with regard to all their predecessors) could not have been brought up in that religion, unless their parents, too, had been uniformly educated in the same belief; or, unless they, or their progenitors, had been converted from the Protestant to the Catholic doctrines. The former hypothesis would be obviously fatal to Usher's system: the latter, had it obtained, would have been known by those who lived in

have admirably adapted the number and the efficacy of these sacred rites, to the wants of his church and of each individual member of the faithful.

From the first Great Parent of the human race, each of his descendants inherited the guilt, which by his disobedience Adam had incurred. The solemn and humiliating truth, that every descendant of Adam is conceived in sin, and is by nature a child of wrath, the Catholic church has ever regarded, as the fundamental mystery of the Christian dispensation. To impress this all-important dogma on the minds of the faithful, her ministers have ever deemed a duty of the highest consequence. But in conveying to their people the knowledge of so awful a mystery, the Pastors of the Catholic church were also careful, to comfort their spiritual children with the assurance, that the Saviour had bequeathed to them a sovereign remedy against the evil, in which, by their forefather's transgression, they were involved. For, to the waters of baptism, the mysterious

Usher's times, in the same way, as the change caused by the Reformation is known, at the present day, to the most unlettered members of society. Yet, it is unquestionable—and the fact would not be contested even by Usher himself—that the Catholics of his day were sincerely convinced, that the religion which they professed was that also of all their progenitors: nor could a single individual be found among them, who had ever heard from any of his predecessors, of any such change, as that which Usher imagines. I have said, that the change, of which Doctor Usher treats, must, if it had occurred, have been transmitted to the knowledge of his contemporaries, in the same way, as the knowledge of the religious change caused by the Reformation has been handed down to our times. But, in truth, the argument in favour of what I have advanced is still stronger: for the change caused by the Reformation was favourable to the pride of the human understanding, as by it, many of the mysterious dogmas which Catholics profess were abandoned—while, in the change, which Usher supposes the ancient Irish Christians to have made from Protestantism to Catholicity, all those doctrines were introduced, which, at present, are judged so revolting, by the adherents of the Reformation. Such an innovation, in the belief of an entire people, if human power could effect it, would, doubtless, have been accompanied by some peculiar circumstances, that would have preserved the recollection of so extraordinary a revolution: and yet, no vestige of it remained at the time when Usher wrote: it therefore never occurred.

efficacy of regenerating the person to whom they were applied, and of purifying him from the stain of original guilt, had been mercifully annexed by the Redeemer.

The eagerness, with which this sacred institution was resorted to by the first converts to Christianity, is attested, in almost every page of the history that relates to the primitive church. The same solicitude to profit of the sacred rite of regeneration, for which the converts to the Gospel were distinguished, in the Apostolick ages, is also discernible at every following period, and in every country, where the tidings of redemption were announced with success.

In no country, were the first converts to Christianity more distinguished, than they were in Ireland, for the orthodoxy of their faith upon the transmission of original sin, and the necessity of Baptism for the remission of that hereditary stain. To the production of this settled belief, regarding a dogma of such paramount importance, the experience which the Apostle of Ireland had acquired, during his mission against the Pelagians in Britain, must have greatly contributed. His mission to Britain, enabled St. Patrick to observe the causes, that led to the introduction and dissemination of the Pelagian heresy in that country. He was thus happily prepared, at the time, when he engaged in the conversion of the Irish nation, to forewarn and secure his Neophytes, against an error, which, wheresoever it prevailed, seriously injured the interests of religion.

The history of St. Patrick's missionary progress through Ireland, abounds with instances, which show, how solicitous the Saint was, to teach his converts the saving efficacy of the laver of regeneration, and to dispose them for the worthy participation of so great a sacrament. What the doctrine of the primitive church of Ireland was, respecting the matter, required for the performance of this mysterious ablution,

may be also learned from the same history. The circumstances which that history describes, as having almost uniformly accompanied the celebration of baptism in Ireland, demonstrate, that according to the belief of the Irish church, the baptismal ablution could be validly administered in water only.

The biography of St. Columbkill records a fact, which strongly illustrates the doctrine of the ancient Irish church on this subject. While the Saint was journeying through the country which the Picts inhabited, an infant was brought by its parents to him, to be initiated in the holy rite of Baptism. It happened, that even the small supply of water, which was requisite for the performance of the sacred ceremony, could not, by any exertion, be procured. Unwilling, that the child should be deprived of the blessings, annexed by the Redeemer to the Sacrament of Baptism, the Saint had recourse to prayer, to implore the special interposition of Heaven in favour of the infant. As soon as his supplication was concluded, the holy man invoked the Divine blessing on the rock, on which he had a moment before prostrated himself in prayer. The invocation of the Saint was heard by the Most High, and the rock, yielding to the benediction, which had descended upon it, sent forth a stream of water, with which the Sacrament was administered, and the child was cleansed from the defilement of primeval guilt.*

The authority, on which the fact depends, that has been now narrated, cannot be reasonably called in question. But whatsoever opinion may be entertained on that precise point, the inference, in favour of which, that fact has been adduced, cannot be controverted; for it is manifest, that unless the biographer of St. Columbkill felt persuaded, that

* Adamnan. Vit. S. Col. L. 2. C. 10.

those for whom he designed his narrative believed that baptism was necessary for salvation, and that water was the appointed matter of the rite of Christian regeneration, he would never have introduced into his history the fact of which we have made mention. To fabricate such a narrative, would be preposterous in a biographer, if the people, by whom the subject of his history was especially venerated, regarded baptism as an ordinance of secondary importance only, and water as a Sacramental matter, for which, in case of necessity, any other liquid substance might be substituted.

The sacred institution of baptism, it has been remarked, was ordained for the remission of original guilt. Every child of Adam being stained with this defilement, at his entrance into life, it was of the utmost consequence, that the remedy designed for the remission of that sin should be easy of access, to all those for whom it was instituted. In the economy, according to which, the Catholic church believes, that her Divine Founder regulated the dispensation of his Sacraments, peculiar care was taken by him, to facilitate the administration of Christian baptism. To the pastors of his church, the ordinary performance of this sacred function was indeed consigned by the Redeemer. But, should any emergency prevent the appointed minister, from discharging so important a duty, his place might be supplied by any member of the laity, who knew how to administer that holy ordinance.

With this disciplinary usage, the practice of primitive Christianity in Ireland entirely agreed. In the memoirs of the holy men, who lived in the first ages of Irish Christianity, we find instances frequently mentioned,* which

* Vit. S. Senan. C. 3. Lynch Cambrensis Evers. p. 202. The decree of the Synod of Cashel supposes, that there were churches furnished with baptismal

show, that it was customary, in those times, to administer baptism in the publick churches of the country. And so great was the solicitude of our early pastors, to provide for the exact celebration of this sacred ordinance, that even in the publick churches, no Clergyman was permitted to administer baptism, unless he had previously obtained the approbation of his Ordinary.* That the competency of a lay person to confer, in case of necessity, the rite of Christian regeneration, was, however, acknowledged by the Irish church, appears from the reply of Lanfranc, the Primate of England, to Domhnald, Archbishop of Cashel. In this reply, Lanfranc supposes, as an established truth, the doctrine, that lay persons can baptize validly; and he infers from these premises, that, to attain salvation, infants required the rite of regeneration only, and did not need to participate of the holy Eucharist. It is scarcely necessary to remark, that this mode of reasoning would have been wholly inapplicable, if Lanfranc were not persuaded, that Dommald admitted the premises, from which the English Primate deduced his conclusion. Neither can it be reasonably supposed, that the belief of Dummald, on the subject which we now discuss, differed, in any respect, from that which his brethren throughout Ireland then professed.

But it is not only from the attention which the Irish church paid to the rites, which are deemed essential to the validity of baptism, that her orthodoxy respecting that sacrament may be pronounced upon. The same truth may be also demonstrated, by referring to the ritual, which regulated the less important ceremonies, that are em-

fonts in Ireland. In short, from the circumstance, that there were certain seasons set aside for the solemn administration of baptism in Ireland, baptism must have been frequently conferred there, in the publick churches.

* Synod, S. Patric. Auxil. &c. Canon 24.

ployed in the administration of baptism. As soon as the candidate for baptism was cleansed by the sacred rite of regeneration from the stain of original guilt, he was clothed with a white garment, in token of the purity and grace, which were now imparted to his soul.* The same impressive ceremony was designed, moreover, to admonish the person who had been recently baptized, that it was his duty, to preserve undefiled the spotless robe of innocence, which now rendered his soul a pleasing object to the Most High.

In conformity with the usage of former ages, the Neophyte received immediately after baptism the holy rite of Confirmation. As soon as he was prepared by the graces, which are annexed to these sacred ordinances, he was next invited to approach the Eucharistic banquet, and refresh his soul with that heavenly food.

Before I dismiss the inquiry upon the faith and discipline of the Irish church concerning baptism, I shall notice some observations on these subjects, which appear to have been first advanced by Lanfranc, the celebrated Primate of the English church. The observations, to which I refer, are contained in a letter, which Lanfranc addressed to the Irish Prelates, in order to induce them to reform some disciplinary abuses, which were said to be prevalent in Ireland. Among these abuses, Lanfranc enumerated the custom, which was then followed by the Irish Clergy, of administering baptism, without anointing the Neophyte with the holy Chrism. The severity, with which the English Primate censures this omission, shows, that he would not have passed over in silence any other departure from the ordinary rite, prescribed in the administration of baptism. We may hence securely infer, that the

* Ep. adv. Corot.

omission noticed by Lanfranc, was the only peculiarity which distinguished the baptismal rite in Ireland, from that, which was followed in England and in the other principal countries of Europe. The omission of which Lanfranc complains, did not, it is obvious, affect, in any manner, the valid administration of the sacrament of baptism. The ceremony, of which there is question, was, after all, but an accidental one, which the usage of venerable antiquity had ordinarily connected with the administration of baptism. In the infancy of Christianity, and while the profession of the Gospel was visited with punishment, it was justly deemed important, that, immediately after baptism, the Neophyte should be strengthened, by the grace of confirmation, for the trials to which his faith exposed him. But as it sometimes happened, that the Bishop was unable to assist at the baptism of each Neophyte, the celebration of the sacrament of confirmation was occasionally deferred, until he could find leisure to administer the holy Chrism.

In course of time, when the sword of persecution ceased from its sanguinary inflictions, the delay in administering confirmation, which accident had hitherto occasioned, began to be sanctioned by prevailing usage. An opportunity was thus afforded, both of instructing more fully those who were converted from infidelty, and of ascertaining whether they were properly disposed to receive that sacred rite.

In place, however, of the sacramental Chrism, which was previously conferred, immediately after baptism had been administered, another rite of a merely ceremonial nature was now substituted. According to the new rite, the Priest, while celebrating baptism, applied to the top of the Neophyte's head the holy unction, with which the Bishop anointed the forehead of the person whom he confirmed. It was of the

omission of this new rite, that Lanfranc complained, in the letter which he addressed to the Irish Clergy.

At the present remote period, it would be vain to labour, in searching for the cause, which occasioned the mode of administering baptism in Ireland to differ, in what regards the ceremony of which we have been now treating, from the usage which was received in England, and in the other principal countries of Europe. To some, the conjecture will not, perhaps, appear improbable, that, owing to the peculiar system, by which so considerable a number of Bishops was maintained in Ireland, up to the period, when the Synod of Kells was celebrated, the discipline was also still continued there, of administering confirmation to all without distinction immediately after they had been baptized.

To the charge preferred by Lanfranc against the Irish Clergy, of omitting the use of Chrism in the celebration of baptism, some recent writers have added a more serious accusation. If we believe these writers, a usage prevailed in Ireland, previously to the English invasion, that, when the children of wealthy parents were to be baptized, milk, instead of water, was used in the performance of the mystic ablution. Enough has been already stated, to prove, that Lanfranc knew nothing of this abuse. Nor can we suppose, that, if so flagrant an irregularity had prevailed in Ireland, in a matter of such paramount importance, Lanfranc should have been unacquainted with it.

The letter which Lanfranc addressed to Turlogh, King of Ireland, shows, that he had taken care, to inform himself fully on the state of the Irish church, and especially on the usages received in Ireland, which in his judgment, required to be reformed. It is, moreover, certain, that previously to the time of Lanfranc, every monument of Ecclesiastical history of Ireland, in which there is any thing contained

on the subject of baptism, favours the inference, that water alone was used by the Irish Clergy, in administering the rite of Christian regeneration. Whence then, it may be asked, could the charge, which it is now proposed to refute, have derived its origin? Some specious pretence at least must have existed, in order that those who first preferred so serious an accusation, could have hoped to obtain credit with the public.

To this natural inquiry it may be answered, that at the period of the English invasion, but a very slender pretext, indeed, sufficed, to induce the writers, who favoured the cause of Henry, to misrepresent the doctrine, or discipline, which was then received by the Irish church. In truth, the promise, that he would employ his authority and influence in reforming the abuses, which his partisans imputed to the professors of Christianity in Ireland, constituted the plea, by which Henry was enabled to obtain the sanction of the Roman Pontiff, for interfering with the independence of the Irish people. To give colour and probability to that plea, every pretence was eagerly profited of by the abettors of Henry's designs, to further the cause which they espoused. In these circumstances, the most innocent peculiarity in the Irish rite of administering baptism, would be likely to receive a perverse interpretation, from the prejudice of the invaders.

That some ceremony liable to be misconstrued was then used in administering baptism in Ireland, appears not improbable. From the writings of St. Jerome and the acts of the Third Council of Carthage, we learn, that, while in some churches of the West, the custom prevailed of administering milk and wine to the Neophytes, who were recently baptized, in others, the usage was adopted, of refreshing those, who had just emerged from the laver of

regeneration, with a draught of milk and honey. In the language of the inspired Apostle, the Neophyte, after he had been purified from original guilt, in the waters of baptism, should, "like the new-born infant, desire rational milk without guile."* To impress the solemn truth, which these words conveyed, the ceremony, of which we have just now spoken, was admirably adapted. The same rite, or one very similar to it, there is reason to believe, was introduced into Ireland by the first teachers of Christianity in that country; and to this circumstance, we may, perhaps, trace the origin of the calumny, which has been now refuted.

From an early period of the church, it became usual, to set apart some of the more sacred festivals, which the piety of the first Christians honoured, for the initiation of those, who desired to be admitted by baptism into the number of the faithful. In the greater part of the Western church, the feasts of Easter and of Pentecost were fixed upon, as the most appropriate for the celebration of that solemn ceremony. In some places, however, in the churches of Africa, for example, the Epiphany also was consecrated, by the performance of the same sacred rite. A similar usage to that of the African churches was followed in Ireland; and by the direction of a Synod, which was celebrated there, soon after the conversion of that country, the holy seasons of the Epiphany, of Easter and of Pentecost, were set apart for the solemn administration of baptism.†

Among the controversies, which first troubled the peace of the Christian church, the question which relates to the Minister of Baptism, holds a conspicuous place. The importance of the spiritual benediction, which baptism confers, made every inquiry relating to this sacrament be regarded with deep interest. Could, it was asked, the

* First Ep. St. Peter. V. 2. † Synod St. Patric. apud d'Achery. Cap. 19.

grace of regeneration be imparted by a Minister, who was separated by heresy from the peace and unity of the Catholic church? This inquiry was followed by another of not less importance. If heresy impeded the valid administration of the baptismal rite, why, it was urged, should not the commission of any other grievous sin, by which the grace of the Holy Ghost is extinguished in the soul, incapacitate the Minister of that sacrament, for the discharge of so sublime a function. To these inquiries, the assertors of the Catholic faith replied, that, in virtue of the Divine institution, the laver of regeneration purified the receiver from original guilt, independently of the personal merits of the Minister, by whom baptism was celebrated. This decision of the Universal Church, the first teachers of the Gospel in Ireland carefully impressed on the minds of their converts. In the language of an ancient canon of the Irish church, baptism, by whomsoever conferred, should not be reiterated; because, how great soever may be the depravity of the sower, the seed is not thereby defiled.*

The administration of the baptismal rite was followed by that of confirmation. Of the discipline of the Irish church respecting confirmation, the letter of St. Patrick to Coroticus supplies sufficient evidence. In this letter, the Saint represents the persons, in whose favour he addressed himself to Coroticus, as having been hurried into captivity, just after they had been regenerated in the waters of baptism, and while their foreheads yet shone with the sacred Chrism, with which they had been anointed in confirmation.

The sentiments of the early pastors of the Irish church on the Eucharistic institution, may be readily ascertained, by referring to the language, which they ordinarily employed, when they treated upon that mystery. The various epithets,

* Synod S. Patric. Cap. 7. Ap. D'Achery.

with which the Catholic church honours the august Sacrament of the altar, and which so clearly attest her faith regarding it, every where present themselves in those monuments of primitive Irish Christianity, which relate to the Eucharist. With the nicest discrimination, these records of the ancient faith of Ireland point out the several relations, under which, the Catholic, at the present day, is taught to contemplate the institution of the Christian passover. According to the testimony which they supply, the first professors of the Gospel in Ireland, regarded the Eucharist as at once the most august Sacrament of the New Law, and as a Sacrifice, by which the faithful offer worthy homage to the Deity. In this belief, the converts to the Gospel in Ireland had been initiated, from the very commencement of St. Patrick's mission among them.

In the number of those, whom the Saint himself gained over to the Christian faith, the two daughters of King Leogaire have been particularly noticed. The instructions of the holy man had, we are told, enkindled in the souls of these illustrious Neophytes, an ardent desire to behold, face to face, the Divine Redeemer, whom St. Patrick preached unto them. Eager to gratify the pious anxiety of his converts, the Saint unfolded to them the mysterious doctrine of the Eucharist, telling them, that by worthily participating of this sacred rite, they might accomplish the holy object which they so much desired. "Give us," replied the Royal Virgins, "the Sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ, that we may be freed from the corruption of the flesh, and see our spouse who is in heaven." The Saint, yielding to their entreaties, celebrated Mass, and administered to them the holy communion.*

In the code of Catholic Christianity, the Redeemer is

* Probus L. 2, C. 15.

believed to have ordained the Eucharistic Sacrifice, as a principal means, by which his followers were to render supreme worship to the Deity, and propitiate the Divine mercy. By the oblation of the Cross, the price of man's redemption was indeed paid to the offended justice of Heaven. It was, however, meet, that the Saviour should select some appropriate medium, by which the graces of redemption should be communicated to each of the faithful. To attain this important purpose, the Sacraments of the New Dispensation were, all Christians confess, specially ordained by Jesus Christ. In the Eucharist, the victim of redemption was himself mysteriously but really present under the Sacramental species. Nothing was then wanted to that august rite, to constitute it a Sacrifice, by which "the true adorers of the Fathers might adore him in spirit and in truth." Thus by this admirable economy, the faithful were enabled at once to satisfy their spiritual hunger with the bread of eternal life, and to offer to the Almighty a worship, worthy of his acceptance. In this solemn ordinance, the immolation of the Cross was mystically renewed, and "the Well Beloved Son," representing the merits of the great atoning Sacrifice of Calvary, supplicated the Eternal Father, in favour of mankind. The lofty epithets, with which the Irish writers of antiquity honour the Eucharistic institution, attest their profound veneration for that sacred ordinance. "The Sacrificial Mystery," "The Mysteries of the Holy Sacrifice," "The Making of the Body of Christ."* In these and other such terms, the most distinguished of our early writers make known the belief, which they entertained upon the institution of the altar. This holy

* "Sacrificale mysterium," "Sacrificii mysteria," "Christi corpus ex more conficere." St. Gallus ap. Wal. Strab. V. S. G. L. 1, C. 18. Cumineus, Life of St. Columba, Cap. 4. Adamnan, L. 1, Cap. 40 and 44.

Sacrifice, they inform us, the Christian church offers to God for her own welfare, for a commemoration of Jesus Christ—who said, "Do this in remembrance of me,"—and for the faithful departed.*

The doctrine, which the passages now recited convey, may be also deduced from many interesting incidents, which are blended with the history of the Irish church. In the narrative of St. Patrick's death, we are told, that as the hour of his departure from life approached, a Bishop, by name Tassach, administered the Sacrifice to him.† The learned Dungal, in his vindication of the respect, which, in the belief of Catholics, is due to Holy Images and to the Saints, carefully admonishes his readers, that, while a certain veneration is due to them, the worship of Sacrifice, or supreme adoration, is to be paid to God alone. This admonition would, it is obvious, have been altogether unmeaning, if those for whom the advice was intended, were not accustomed to fulfil the duty of religious worship, by the oblation of Sacrifice.

In the life of the illustrious Columbkill, it is recorded, that when officiating as Deacon, on a certain festival, wine could not be procured for the oblation of the holy Sacrifice, the Saint invoked the name of Jesus Christ, and changed water into wine. As soon as the miracle was performed, the holy Deacon, addressing himself to the Clergy who were present, exclaimed—"Here is wine for you, which the Lord Jesus has sent for the celebration of his mysteries."‡

* Nunc Ecclesia multis modis offert Deo; primo pro seipsa; secundo pro commemoratione Jesu Christi, qui dixit, Hoc facite in meam commemorationem; tertio pro animabus defunctis. Ap. D'Achery. L. 2. C. 9.

† Appropinquante autem hora exitus ejus, dedit ei Sacrificium Episcopus Tassach.—Third Life of St. Patrick, Cap. 89.

‡ Adamnan, L. 2. C. 1. The narrative of this extraordinary event shows, that water also was used in the celebration of the Divine mysteries.

That the ancient Irish church admitted the Catholic doctrine respecting the oblation of the Eucharist as a Sacrifice, may be moreover deduced from the peculiar words, which she introduced into their canons, upon the celebration of that rite. In these canons, she designates the Eucharist—the action of the Minister, who celebrates the Eucharistic institution—and finally, the officiating Minister himself—by those appellations, by which she should distinguish them if she really professed the Catholic doctrine regarding the Eucharistic Sacrifice.*

In the life of St. Malachy, which was written by St. Bernard, it is related, that an Irish Clergyman, who had fallen into error on the Eucharist, presumed to assert, that this mystery contained neither the grace nor the reality of the Body of Jesus Christ, and was only the mere sign of both. For this error he was reproved and excommunicated by St. Malachy, and visited by God with a sickness, of which he died, after having, however, abjured his heresy."†

"All of us," says Sedulius, one of the brightest ornaments of the ancient church of Ireland, "who, under Christ our Leader, are regenerated in the fountain of waters, taking his body and blood, eat and drink thereof, that we may deserve to enjoy the Holy Ghost."‡

In closing this inquiry into the ancient belief of the Irish church respecting the Eucharist, I may remark, that the arguments adduced to show, that she considered the

* The words, "oblatio," "offerre," are those, by which the Irish canons designate the celebration of the Eucharist, and the action of the Priest who consecrates that Sacrament.

† Perpetuity of the Faith. Dublin Ed. of 1834, p. 237.

‡ Omnes enim, qui Christo duce nostro in aquarum fonte renascimur, ejus corpus et sanguinem sumentes edimus et potamus, ut sancti spiritus esse mereamur. This passage, while it proves that Sedulius believed the real presence, shows, also, that in his time water was the matter used in the administration of baptism. Sedulius, L. 5, C. 18.

Eucharist both as a Sacrament and a Sacrifice, mutually support and assist each other: "For," to use the words of the illustrious Bishop of Meaux,* "why should Christ become present in the Eucharist, before the communion, unless to supplicate God for us? The action, by which he thus becomes present, is it not most acceptable to God, and at the same time most suited, both to give the honour of supreme adoration to the Almighty, and to obtain from him the graces, which we stand in need of—the two ends for which Sacrifice is offered? So Melancthon thought, and so thought many other Lutherans also: for, said they, it was the ancient custom of supplicants, to bear in their hands, the children of those whom they wished to propitiate, judging that the children would be the most powerful intercessors with the parents. If, therefore, Christ be admitted to be really present, at the time of consecration, what reason is there, why he should not be offered in a similar manner to his Father, to obtain grace for us?" On the other hand, if we except a few extravagant writers, we shall find, that all those who have ever acknowledged, that the Eucharistic rite should be viewed as a Sacrifice, have also invariably confessed, that the real presence of Christ was the basis on which they rested their belief.

"Were there only one or two passages in the ancient† writings in which it was affirmed, that what we receive in the Eucharist is the body of Jesus Christ; that the bread is made the body of Jesus Christ; that it is changed, converted, and transelemented into the body of Jesus Christ:

* Histoire des Variations. L. 6, No. 22, 26, 35.

† Perpetuity of the Faith, p. 172 and 173. From the passages already quoted from the ancient records of the Irish church, it is obvious, that these observations are as applicable to them, as they are to the writings, to which the Author of the Perpetuity refers.

if, while this was affirmed in one or two places only, it was clearly stated in all other passages upon the Eucharist, that the bread is not really changed into the body of Jesus Christ; that it becomes only the sign and the figure of his body; these reiterated plain expressions, presenting a distinct idea of the real absence, might explain the other unusual passages, and make the figurative expressions intelligible. Now, the fact is directly the reverse: for, the passages, which the Calvinists adduce to elucidate and define those others that express the real presence, are rare, unnoted, obscure, unknown, and by no means popular; while the passages that lead to the belief of the real presence, are of frequent and ordinary occurrence, and were always in the mouths of the pastors and the people. Hence it was impossible, that these should have been viewed as figurative passages."

I have now laid before the reader the ordinary and familiar language, in which the first pastors of the Irish church expressed the doctrine which they professed, on the venerable Sacrament of the altar. When we call to mind, that this language was addressed to a people who were just emerging from idolatry, and who were wholly unacquainted with the sophistry of modern polemics, it must appear incontrovertible, that the pastors who employed it were desirous to teach that doctrine, which, in its obvious and literal signification, that language conveys. If the justness of this observation be admitted—and to me it appears, that its accuracy cannot be questioned—we must conclude, that the doctrine of primitive Christianity in Ireland respecting the Eucharist, entirely accorded with that, which the Catholic Church now professes.*

* Of the several writers, who belonged to the first ages of the church of Ireland, Scotus is the only one, whose orthodoxy upon the Eucharist has

In the doctrine of the Catholic church upon the Eucharist, the Saviour is, indeed, present, under the Sacramental species, but after a mysterious and ineffable manner. According to the natural mode of existing, Catholics believe, that the Saviour is always seated in Heaven, at the right hand of the Father. But, they also believe, that, by his Almighty power, he is Sacramentally present to us with his substance in the Eucharist, under the appearance of bread and wine. The Sacrament of the Eucharist is, therefore, in the liturgy of the Catholic church, appropriately called the "Mystery of Faith," as well on account of the sublime nature of the doctrine itself, as because, this sacred rite cannot be worthily received without faith. The humble appearances, under which Christ is veiled in the holy Sacrament, require the constant exercise of that virtue, that the great ends, for which the Eucharist was instituted, may be kept in remembrance.

been doubted of by Catholics. His work is not now extant. Some passages in it are, however, referred to, by an ancient writer named Ascelin, who certainly quoted those parts, which appeared to him to be the most objectionable. Yet, the passages thus cited are not, Doctor Lanigan maintains, incompatible with the doctrine of the real presence. From the character of Scotus's writings, it is very probable, that, in his work on the Eucharist, Scotus, without intending to impugn the substance of the Catholic dogma of the real presence, refined with an excessive and a dangerous subtility on the question of the mode of Christ's presence in the Sacrament—a question much debated in his time—and was thus led to use "certain profane novelties of words," which made his work be regarded as unorthodox, and drew upon it the censure of the Council of Vercelli. By some learned writers, it has been asserted, that the treatise on the Eucharist, which is now usually ascribed to Bertram, is really the production of Scotus. And in the opinion of Mabillon, and of Boileau, Doctor of Sorbonne, Bertram asserts nothing in the work, thus attributed to him, which is inconsistent with the Catholic doctrine on the real presence. It is certain, that before the Reformation, the orthodoxy of Bertram was never questioned, and that he was even looked upon as a defender of the Catholic faith, and quoted as such, by Fisher, the illustrious Bishop of Rochester. On the doctrine of predestination, Scotus fell into various errors. His treatise on that subject was condemned by the Third Council of Valence in 855, by the Council of Langres, and by Pope Nicholas, in 859. "In this treatise," says Doctor Lanigan, "Scotus sometimes

The infirmity of man occasions him frequently to forget the presence of that Great Being, in whom every creature lives, moves, and exists; and it is often necessary to remind him of a truth, which nature itself every where proclaims. It was, therefore, worthy of the Saviour's love, to admonish his followers by a distinct command, that, when celebrating the Eucharistic institution, they should "show the death of the Lord until he come." In virtue of that institution, he was to be, indeed, really present, under the symbols of bread and wine. But the presence of the Saviour there was to be, after a mysterious, sacramental, and spiritual manner, which, as it would not affect the senses, would require the Christian to exercise his faith and his devotion, in order to call to mind the truths connected with the sacred rite of the Eucharist. When conversing with his Apostles, after his resurrection, the

quotes the Fathers, particularly St. Augustine, but in the quibbling and clipping mode of captious polemical disputants." The artifices resorted to by Scotus, to press St. Austin into his support, have been uniformly adopted by every succeeding innovator, and very particularly by Calvin. In his animadversions on this disingenuity of Calvin, Bellarmine speaks thus: "Silere nullo modo possum adeo parum vero ac simplici testimonio B. Augustini confisum esse Calvinum, ut ausus non fuerit locum unum, eumque diu quoesitum, et ex omnibus selectum proferre, nisi multis fucatum coloribus, mendaciisque bene suffultum, ac diligentissime fraudibus obvolutum." Bellarm. Proefat. De Liber. Arbit. The learned Cardinal subjoins one example of the disingenuity of which he complains. St. Augustine (Lib. de Corrept. et grat.) lays down the following propositions: "Prima libertas erat, posse non peccare: NOVISSIMA ERIT multo major, non posse peccare." Calvin (Instit. L. 2, C. 3.) proposes to cite these words, and thus prefaces the quotation: "Audiamus, nunc Augustinum suis verbis loquentem." * * * * * * * * * * Before he comes to the passage in question, he again repeats, that he intends to quote the very words of St. Austin—"Ejus tamen verbis referam." * * * * * * * * * "Primam fuisse libertatem, posse non peccare: *nostram* multo majorem non posse peccare." The corruption of the text is here obvious to every reader. To those who understand Calvin's doctrine, the importance of the alteration will be also equally manifest. I may add, that as Calvin, in his institutions, (L. 2, Cap. 3, Sect. 7,) openly asserts, that St. Austin taught erroneous doctrine respecting grace and free will, his own doctrine must, of course, have differed essentially, from that, which St. Augustine maintained.

Saviour said to them—"These are the words which I spoke to you while *I was yet with you.*" If, in consequence of the change, which his body underwent in the resurrection, and of his approaching ascension, the Saviour, though conversing face to face with his Apostles, could speak of himself, as if he were then absent from them, he might, assuredly, ordain, that the Eucharist, in which he was to be present after a mysterious manner, should be celebrated in his remembrance.

From what I have said regarding the manner of Christ's presence in the Eucharist, it follows as a necessary consequence, that the Eucharist may be denominated a type, or figure. This denomination, the very name of Sacrament, which Catholics give to the Eucharist, necessarily implies. Nor does the appellation contain any thing, which is at variance with the belief of the real presence.

"For, we must distinguish in the words image, figure, and antitype, as in many other such words, two different significations, the one natural and primitive, the other popular and ordinary.*

"In their natural signification, the words figure, image, &c. denote nothing more than a mere representation; and, as an invisible thing, though present, can be represented by something visible, corporeal, and external—it by no means follows, that a thing is not present, because it is represented by some visible likeness. Thus, we commonly say, that the countenance and the eyes are the images of the soul, and yet, those who use this expression, believe, at the same time, that the soul is present in the eyes and countenance. The tongues of fire were the figure of the Holy Ghost, who was present in them. In the sacrament of baptism, the external ablution, is the figure of the internal ablution, and

* Perpetuity of the Faith, pp. 49 and 50.

yet these two ablutions are connected and united together. We must renounce common sense, to trifle away time in a controversy upon this point, and obstinately to maintain, with some Calvinists, that these words, always and of their own nature, suppose the absence of the thing represented.

"It is true, however, that, as the things typified are not ordinarily united to their figures, and as we seldom represent, by images, any other than absent things, popular usage has affixed to the words antitype, figure, and image, another signification, according to which, to be a figure, and to contain the reality represented by the figure, are in some measure opposed to each other. And it is in this second sense, the Fathers have often said, that the figure neither was the reality, nor contained the reality.

"These two kinds of significations, are admitted in language; and, though they occasion an apparent verbal contradiction, they easily coalesce in the sense. For agreeably to these two different significations, it is true to say, that the Eucharist is a figure, an image, an antitype of the body of Jesus Christ, and that it is not a figure, an image, an antitype of the body of Jesus Christ. For, the Eucharist is not a figure, an image, an antitype, according to the popular signification of these words, which excludes the reality, but the Eucharist is a figure and an antitype, agreeably to the natural signification of the words figure and antitype: for, these words, in their natural signification, by no means exclude the presence of the thing represented; and, when applied in this sense to the Eucharist, they signify, that this sacrament represents the body of Jesus Christ, although, at the same time, it includes and contains it. Hence the Fathers, sometimes using these words in their natural signification, have not hesitated to admit, that the Eucharist is a figure and an image. But, because the Eucharist really

contains Jesus Christ, they also call it the truth—and, adopting the popular meaning of the word image, they oppose the Eucharist to the figures and images of the ancient law, 'This blood,'* says St. John Chrysostom, 'being in figure, expiated sin. If in figure it has had so much power, and so much virtue—if Death has so much dreaded the shadow of this divine blood, how much more will he dread the truth itself.' "

The mystery of the real presence being once admitted, the doctrine of the Catholic church upon the Eucharistic Sacrifice, contains but little difficulty. "The Sacrifice of the mass," says the council of Trent, "was established, in order to represent that, which was once accomplished upon the Cross, to perpetrate its memorial to the end of ages, and to apply to our souls its salutary virtues, for the remission of those sins which we every day commit." To the Sacrifice of the Cross, the Catholic church attributes the whole merit of Redemption; and by that one oblation, she confesses, that the entire ransom of sin was offered to the Almighty. In celebrating the Sacrifice of the Altar, it is not, therefore, her intention, to offer up a fresh price, or another ransom for our salvation; her design is to commemorate that one atoning Sacrifice, and to apply its sanctifying influence to the souls of men. "Thus, in her principles, the payment of our redemption is not any more reiterated; but that, which applies this redemption, is perpetuated constantly."†

The principles I have now laid down, render it unnecessary for me, to discuss, at any length, the arguments, by

* Hom. 45 on St. John.

† Bossuet's Exposit. In dismissing this inquiry, I may remark, that, in the first ages of the Irish church, the Eucharist was occasionally administered under one kind only. By the rule of St. Columbanus, the novices of this institute were not permitted to receive the consecrated Chalice.

which some Protestant writers have endeavoured to prove, that the primitive church of Ireland did not profess the Catholic doctrine on the Eucharistic institution. In support of their assertion, these authors refer to certain passages, which are occasionally found in the works of our ancient writers. They tell us, that it is sometimes stated in these passages, "that the Eucharist is a figure." Secondly, "That the body of Christ is taken in it by faith, and in remembrance of his passion." Thirdly, "That the Eucharistic bread is made mystically of the body of Christ;" and Fourthly, "That the sacrifice of the Lord's passion was once offered for our salvation."

On the last recited objection, I shall subjoin some observations from "Bossuet's Exposition of the Catholic Faith." On the three preceding points, enough has been already said, to establish, that they contain nothing inconsistent with the proofs, by which it has been shown, that the doctrine of the primitive church of Ireland, on the Eucharist, agreed with that of the Catholic church.

"If the word, '*offered*,' be understood to imply the actual death of the victim, then," says the Bishop of Meaux, "I allow it to be true, that, in such cases Jesus Christ is neither offered up, any longer, in the Eucharist, nor even on any other occasion whatsoever. But, the fact is, that in different parts of the sacred writings, the word, 'offer,' has a much more extensive signification. Often it is said, that we offer to God, whatever we present before him. And the church, which regulates its language, as well as its doctrine, not by the mere Epistle to the Hebrews, but by the entire body of the Scriptures, does not hesitate to say, that Christ Jesus offers himself to God, whenever presenting himself before his Majesty, he appears there in behalf of men—consequently, that he offers himself likewise in the

Sacrifice of the holy Eucharist. This is, indeed, an expression, that is general in the writings of the Fathers."*

That the Divine Legislator of the Christian dispensation instituted a sacrament for the remission of sins c mmitted after baptism, the Catholic church has uniformly taught in every age, from the period of her establishment by Jesus Christ. Before, however, the benefit of this sacrament can be imparted, the penitent is required to make to her Minister an humble and sorrowful confession of his sins. The accusation of himself before the minister of God, the returning sinner must accompany with a penitential spirit, and in compliance with the instructions of the inspired precursor of the Messiah, he must be prepared to "bring forth fruits worthy of penance."

If the sins of the penitent have scandalised the community to which he belongs; if they have occasioned injury to another in reputation or property; it is not enough, that he is sorry for them; his repentance is pronounced insufficient unless he be resolved, to remove the cause of scandal which he has given, and to repair the wrong he has inflicted on his neighbour's character or fortune.

Of the perfect accordance of the doctrine now laid down

* In the Life of St. Gallus, an Irish Missionary, who, in the seventh century, preached the Gospel in different parts abroad, and founded the Monastery of St. Gall, in Switzerland, an interesting incident is mentioned, which, on account of its connexion with the subject, which has been now discussed, I shall here subjoin. Gallius had received from the Father of Fridiburga, the intended Queen of Sigebert, King of Austrasia, some valuable presents, among which was an elegant silver cup. The Saint ordered Magnoald, one of his disciples, to distribute these gifts among the poor. Magnoald wished to preserve the cup for the use of the altar. Gallus, however, ordered the cup to be given away, saying, that he remembered the words of St. Peter—"Silver and gold I have none:" and that his master, Columbanus, was wont *to offer the sacrifice of salvation in brazen vessels*, because our Saviour is said to have been affixed to the cross with nails of brass. Walafr. Strab. Vita. S. G. L. 1, Cap. 18. Lanig. Vol. 2. p. 433.

with the belief of the primitive church of Ireland, we have the most satisfactory evidence. Indeed, even in the most familiar usages of the Irish people, we may discover traces of the doctrine, which they held, regarding the divine institution of confession. Among these usages, there was one which was formerly very prevalent in Ireland. The custom to which I refer, relates to the practice of the Irish people, of designating their pastors by epithets, which were strongly expressive of the peculiar virtues, for which these pastors were distinguished. Of the epithets, which were employed for this purpose, none more frequently occur in the records of Irish ecclesiastical antiquity, than those, which commend the zeal of such among the Clergy, as devoted themselves to the labours of the Confessional. If the practice of confession had not been generally received by the Irish people, it is obvious, that the appellations of "Confessor," of "Spiritual Director," &c. with which so many of their pastors* were honoured by them, would have been ill-adapted and unmeaning epithets.

From among the various documents, which attest the ancient belief of the Irish people respecting the sacrament of penance, I shall select the penitential of the Abbot Cummian, an Ecclesiastick whose high reputation for virtue and learning has secured for him the respect of every writer on the ecclesiastical history of Ireland. In this treatise, so justly esteemed for its antiquity, and for the copious exposition which it supplies, of the creed formerly professed by the Irish people, we find, that mention is distinctly made of the confession even of the secret sins, which are committed in thought only, and of the penance which should be

* Vid. the Life of St. Gormgal, A. A. S. S. p. 141 & 715; of St. Dubtach, Tr. Th. p. 298; of St. Maidoc, Cap. 20 and 54.

enjoined for these transgressions of the Divine law.* With the doctrine of Cummian, that laid down by St. Columbanus in the penitential, which the latter Saint also composed, entirely accords.

The canons of the Irish church confirm the accuracy of the inference, to which the authorities just now-referred to naturally conduct us. These canons treat explicitly of the confession and satisfaction which are required of the penitent, and of the absolution to be pronounced by the Minister of the sacrament.† Indeed, the regular frequentation of the sacred rite of penance, was deemed of so much importance by the early professors of Christianity in Ireland, that negligence in the discharge of that duty, was regarded as a sure indication of tepidity and indifference in the concerns of salvation.

Among the abuses, which are stated to have prevailed in the See of Connor, previously to the time, when St. Malachy was appointed the Chief Pastor of that diocess, the neglect of confession is distinctly enumerated. The successful exertions of St. Malachy, to correct so grievous a disorder, have been particularly commended by those writers, who have recorded the Apostolical labours of that illustrious Prelate.

That a repugnance to comply with the obligation of confessing our sins, especially those sins, which are concealed from human view, is deeply seated in the human heart, cannot be denied. But the more violent our repugnance is to such a duty, the more certain is the conclusion, that so painful a rite as that of confession could never have been

* Cummian's Penitential; passim. This treatise is contained in the twelfth volume of the work entitled, "Bibliotheca Patrum."

† Usher (Discourse on Religion,) quotes one of these Canons; the Sixth and Seventh Canons of the Synod of Cashel show, that to confess at the hour of death, was deemed an imperative duty of every Christian.

submitted to, by the Clergy and the Laity of the Catholic church, unless it were sanctioned by the Divine command. To suppose, for example, that in Ireland, at any period subsequent to the conversion of that country, the obligation of confession could have been imposed on the people, although their predecessors in the faith had never been subjected to the like necessity, would be to hazard an hypothesis, which a moment's reflection would prove to be absurd. Of the several co-existing generations, of which, in every age and in every country, society is made up, each generation, which has grown up to maturity in a Christian community, is familiarly acquainted with the means, which its more experienced contemporaries and associates in religion deem necessary for obtaining pardon for their offences against the law of God, and cannot be deceived in a matter of so much consequence.

If, then, confession had not been regarded by the Irish people, from the very epoch of their conversion, as a means divinely instituted, to obtain the remission of sin, no effort that could be subsequently made, to introduce so painful an ordinance, would have proved successful. And if so hopeless an enterprise had been ever engaged in, some vestiges would, doubtless, yet remain, which would point out the date of the attempted innovation, and the persons, by whom so impious and rash a project was undertaken. If, moreover, the introduction of confession had been effected by human interference, would the duty of confessing be extended to so many persons, as, in the belief of Catholics, are now bound by that obligation? Would it, in such case, include not only the laity, but the Clergy, the most exalted in the hierarchy, as well as those most distinguished in the scale of civil society? Would it not, on the contrary, have been partial in its operation?—and, while it pressed heavily on

one class of the community, would it not have been mitigated in favour of another—and especially of that class, to which the supposed innovators belonged?

The penitential of Cummian, besides exhibiting the faith, which the Irish church professed respecting confession, establishes, moreover, the Catholic doctrine on the efficacy of good works, and on the necessity of satisfying the Divine justice for sin by deeds of penance.* In every part of his treatise, the learned Abbot warmly exhorts his readers, to exercise charity towards the poor; to bewail with tears the sins they had committed; and to practise both interior and exterior penance. The same principles, which Cummian lays down for the direction of the penitent, may be found, though not so much developed, in those writings of St. Patrick, which are still extant. "If any one is frail," says the venerable Apostle of Ireland, "let him do penance, even from necessity; for God is merciful."

The history of the early portion of St. Patrick's life makes mention of the rigorous penitential exercises, which the Saint himself practised, both in order to atone for the transgressions of his youth, and to perfect his own virtue. Indeed every account which has been left us of this illustrious Apostle of the Irish church, concurs in representing him, as devoted throughout life to the daily practice of the most rigorous austerities. The canons of discipline which bear

* Besides the fast days in each week, there were three particular portions of each year, during which a solemn fast was formerly kept in Ireland. The principal fast was that of Lent. So late as the tenth century, that fast did not begin in Ireland, until the Saturday, which precedes the first Sunday of Lent. On that Saturday, Doctor Lanigan states, that the Irish people indulged in great feasting and intemperance, and to put a stop to these excesses, it was made a part of Lent. The precise time, when the other three days between Saturday and Shrove Tuesday became fast days of obligation in Ireland, cannot be now determined. Another of the fasting seasons in Ireland, it is probable, preceded Christmas; and during this season, there were three fast days kept in each week. The third fasting season was kept, D'Achery conjectures, after Pentecost.

St. Patrick's name, and which, if not enacted by him, were certainly drawn up at an early period of the Irish church, show, that the doctrine ascribed to the Saint regarding penance, fully coincided with that, which was taught by Cummian, by Columbanus, and by the other holy pastors, who adorned the infancy of Christianity in Ireland.

The preceding observations relate chiefly to the doctrine, which the Irish church formerly professed regarding the necessity of doing penance even for those secret sins, which had not been attended with any scandal. But when the piety of the faithful was shocked by the open commission of any grievous offence, the delinquent was obliged to repair, by publick penance, the scandal, which his misconduct had occasioned. In some cases, where the guilt of the offender was deepened by circumstances of an aggravating character, he was ordered to lay aside his worldly dress, to put on the habit of a pilgrim; and, in this garb, to retire from the country which he had dishonoured by his crimes, and undergo, in exile, the penitential labours, which his transgressions deserved.* The crimes of robbery, of sacrilege, and of murder, were deemed particularly deserving of the severest penance; and a like rigorous expiation was also pronounced necessary, to atone for a violation of conjugal fidelity, or of the obligations, which a voluntary engagement to practice chastity imposed.†

But, if to injure a neighbour in his property were a sin that merited the infliction of a canonical penance, to hurt his fair reputation, by falsely accusing him of a crime, could

* Thus, Macaldus, a leader of a banditti, who was converted by St. Patrick, left his native country by order of the Saint, and retired to the Isle of Man, where he became so eminent for sanctity, that he was promoted to the Bishoprick of that Island. Prob. L. 2, C. 11.

† The several Canons that regulate the nature and duration of the penance to be inflicted for these crimes, are contained in the collection of D'Achery.

not be looked upon as a venial transgression. Such an offence was accordingly visited with severe punishment; and the caluminator was excluded, until the hour of death, from a participation of the holy Eucharist.*

On this subject it is not necessary to dwell longer. The outline, which has been now given, clearly shows, what the doctrine of the Irish church was, on the sacrament of penance, and on the satisfaction, which the Divine law requires, to appease the offended justice of the Almighty.

In the creed of the Catholic church, the charity of the Saviour, not content with leaving to the Lawful Pastors of his Church the power of remitting the sins, which are committed after baptism, provided for the sick an additional source of spiritual consolation. The hour of death was that, the Saviour knew, when human infirmity needed every support which religion could supply. To succour the frailty of his creature in that painful crisis, by leaving to his church a sacrament, endowed with a particular efficacy to sooth the sorrows of sickness, was well worthy the Saviour's benignity. The nature and the benefits of the rite of Extreme Unction are, Catholics believe, clearly unfolded in the Epistle of the Apostle St. James. "Is any one," says this inspired writer, "sick among you? Let him bring in the Priests of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick man: and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him."

Of the extraordinary importance attached to this sacred ordinance by the pastors of the Irish church, the history of St. Malachy supplies a remarkable instance. The Lady of a certain Knight, who resided near Bangor, being at the

* "Qui falso accusant fratres, usque ad exitum vitæ non communicent." Ap. D'Achery, L. 16, C. 13.

point of death, the Saint was sent for, to prepare her for the awful moment of dissolution. When he arrived at her place of abode, her sickness had somewhat abated, and her friends besought the Saint to defer until morning the discharge of his sacred office. Malachy yielded with reluctance to their request. But the holy man had soon occasion to repent of his condescension: for, in a short time after he had retired from her house, he was overtaken by some of the attendants, who proclaimed by their lamentations the melancholy intelligence, that their Mistress was now no more. Overwhelmed with grief and remorse, for the facility with which he had yielded to the importunity of the Lady's friends, the holy Bishop returned to her apartment, and raising his hands to Heaven, exclaimed, "It is I who have sinned by this delay, and not this poor creature." Then standing by the bed of the deceased Lady, the afflicted Pastor, with tears and sighs, poured forth his prayers to God in her behalf. The remaining part of the night the Saint employed in supplicating the Divine mercy, and in conjuring those who were present, to watch and pray along with him. At length, towards the break of day, the Lady opening her eyes raised herself in the bed and reverently saluted the Saint. Elated with joy, the good Bishop then administered to her the sacrament of Extreme Unction. The singular favour, which God had shown to her, at the intercession of his Minister, was prolonged, until she had performed the penance, which the Saint had enjoined her. As soon as this obligation was complied with, the Lady, after receiving with devotion the holy rites of religion, relapsed into her former state of debility, and departed in peace.

The narrative of the death of St. Malachy himself affords another instance, which shows the importance, that he, in

common with the other pastors of the Irish church, attached to the sacred rite of Extreme Unction. The Saint was seized with his last illness, while he sojourned at the monastery of Clairvaux. As soon as he was informed of the dangerous nature of his infirmity, the holy Bishop expressed a desire, to prepare for death by receiving the last Unction. St. Bernard yielding to his request, arrangements were accordingly made for the administration of that consoling ordinance. The venerable Prelate being apprized, that the Clergymen, who were appointed to attend him on this solemn occasion, approached, he expressed a wish to be conveyed to the Convent-church, that he might receive there the last consolations of religion. His wish was acceded to. When the melancholy office was completed, the Saint, after he had humbly implored the prayers of the brethren, returned to his apartment. There he employed the few hours that remained, in the most feeling exercises of devotion, and at length calmly expired.*

On the subject of Holy Orders, enough has been advanced in the preceding pages, to show that the doctrine formerly professed in Ireland on this important point fully coincided with the belief of the Roman church.† In truth, the history of the Irish church, in almost every century, from the time of St. Patrick to the period of the English invasion, supplies numerous instances of ecclesiasticks, some of whom, after

* In the letter, which the celebrated Alcuin wrote (A. D. 790) to Colcu, the Superior of the great school of Clonmacnois, mention is made of a present of oil, which Alcuin sent to Colcu, to be distributed among the Irish Bishops. There must have been then certain religious rites, in which oil was used by them: and, as no other sacred rites can be pointed out, that require oil, except those, in which Catholics use it, the Bishops must have employed the present, which Alcuin sent, in the celebration of those rites. In his letter, Alcuin styles Colcu, *Most Holy Father*, and calls himself *his Son*. Clonmacnois was founded by St. Kieran, A. D. 560.

† In his Treatise, De Statu Ecclesiastico, Gilbert, Bishop of Limerick, enumerates the several orders, which the Catholic church acknowledges.

having been promoted to Holy Orders in Ireland, went abroad, and preached the Gospel in foreign countries, while others of them returned home to the Irish mission, after they had received Holy Orders, either from the Roman Pontiff himself, or from Bishops who were joined in communion with the Apostolick See.

I have already noticed the peculiar usage, which the political situation of the Danes in Ireland induced them to adopt, when they embraced the Gospel. In virtue of that usage, the Bishops, who were chosen to govern these new converts to Christianity, were obliged to receive consecration from the Metropolitan of Canterbury, who was then honoured with the Legatine dignity in England.* As soon as the Bishops who were thus consecrated returned home, they, although politically separated from the other Irish Prelates, assisted, nevertheless, in the same Synods with them, and evinced equal zeal in supporting the faith and discipline of the National church. It cannot be, therefore, questioned, that the Irish church professed the same doctrine with regard to Holy Orders, which was professed by the See of Rome and by the churches in communion with that See.†

* By a decree of the Synod of Rathbreasil, A. D. 1118, the Bishops of Waterford and Limerick became Suffragans of the Archbishop of Cashel. Notwithstanding this decree, the Danes of Limerick succeeded in getting their Bishop consecrated at Canterbury. The subjection of Dublin to Canterbury ceased after the Synod of Kells, A. D. 1152.

† In 816, the Council of Calcuith interdicted Scottish Priests, from administering Sacraments, because it was not known, where or by whom they were ordained. From the reason assigned by the Council, it is obvious, that the Priests in question professed, that they had received Episcopal ordination: for, if they asserted, that they had received any other ordination than Episcopal, the Council would have at once rejected such ordination as invalid. Besides, as the Priests, against whom this regulation was made, are not charged with any deviation from the received faith of the English church, either on the sacrament of Orders, or on any other doctrine, the rule enacted by the Council must be looked upon, as a mere disciplinary arrangement, which some local circum-

Some modern writers have, indeed, affirmed, that the ministry of the primitive church of Ireland was perpetuated in the same manner, which is, at present, in use, among Presbyterians, and that the Catholic doctrine on the divine institution of Episcopacy, and on the necessity of Episcopal ordination, was unknown by the early professors of the Gospel in Ireland.

But the premises on which these writers rely, by no means warrant the inference, which it is endeavoured to deduce from them. The Columbian institute, these writers remark, exhibited this singular feature, that the Abbots, who succeeded St. Columbkill, though they were never advanced beyond the rank of Priesthood, exercised jurisdiction over certain Bishops, who were connected with their monastery. The argument supplied by this peculiar usage, derives additional force, in the opinion of the adversaries of Episcopacy, from the account, which is given in our ecclesiastical annals, of certain Presbyters, who were formerly known in Ireland by the appellation of Culdees.

In replying to these objections, I shall avail myself of the arguments, which have been employed by a distinguished writer,* who has diligently investigated the subject

stances rendered necessary. In 813, a Council held at Chalons Sur Saone, censured the conduct of some Scots, who called themselves Bishops, because these conferred orders, without the permission of the Superiors of the persons, who were ordained by them: such ordinations the Council declared null. In this case, too, it is obvious, that the persons complained of, did not reject Episcopal ordination, and that they were not suspected of any error on that point by the Council. About the very period, when the regulations just now spoken of were enacted, an Irishman, named Helias, was appointed to the See of Angouleme, and another, by name Donatus, placed over the church of Fiesole. The enactments now noticed were, it is probable, rendered necessary, by the great number of Chorepiscopi and other Ecclesiasticks, who in consequence of the Danish incursions into Ireland, took refuge in other countries, and interfered, perhaps, with the disciplinary arrangements of the dioceses in which they took up their abode.

*Lloyd. Primitive Church Government in England and Ireland.

now under consideration. "That Columba," says this writer, "acknowledged the superiority of the Episcopal order above that which he had, being a Priest, and that even in his own monastery: Of this I shall give an instance out of his life, written by his successor, Adamnanus, who was Abbot of Hy when Bede was but seven years old; and who both for the place and time when he lived, was very capable to be a witness of what he writes. He tells us, that there came to Columba in Hy, one that demeaned himself as humbly as he could, that none might know that he was a Bishop. But yet that he could not be concealed from the holy man (Columba): for, one Lord's day, the holy man having ordered him at the Communion to consecrate with him, he called to the holy man, that they might break the Lord's Bread together, as two Priests (used to do in their way of consecration). The holy man, therefore, coming to the altar, on the sudden, Columba looked him in the face, and said to him: 'Christ bless thee, my Brother, thou being a Bishop, break the Bread alone, as a Bishop uses to do. Why hast thou hitherto endeavoured to conceal thyself, that we might not give thee due veneration?' These words of Columba to a Bishop, do sufficiently show, that he acknowledged the Episcopal Order superior to his own Order of Presbyter—which was the first thing that I undertook to prove."

"The other is, that Columba did acknowledge, that Bishops were necessary for the ordaining of others into the Ministry. That he did not think Bishops unnecessary, it appears in that there was always one in his monastery, as Bishop Usher tells us out of the Ulster Annals. And why could not the Abbot live there without a Bishop? Sure it was to do something, which, without the help of a Bishop, he could not do himself, neither singly, nor in conjunction with the rest of his Clergy, and whatsoever that was, it

was part of an office, that made the Bishop more than a name. Of this sort, as there was one always resident in his monastery; so there was, as Bede tells us, a Bishop of all the Province—whether the same with the President, or another, I cannot yet find."

The learned Author proceeds next to show, that neither the ancient church of Scotland, nor that of Ireland, was governed by the Presbyters who were styled Culdees, and that the persons who were thus denominated, belonged to a period more recent by many centuries, than the time of Palladius. To establish these points, he undertakes to prove—that the Culdees are not mentioned by any writer who lived within five hundred years of the time of Palladius, and that they are not said to have existed in Palladius's time, by any writer who lived within a thousand years of Palladius—that the first Monks in Scotland were in nowise different from those in France, and other countries, where the church was wholly governed by Bishops—that commonly their Monasteries were the Schools and Universities of those times, where youth were brought up and fitted for Holy Orders, and, when chosen and recommended by their Superiors, ordained by proper Bishops, who either resided in the monastery, or were brought there, for the purpose of conferring Orders—that Columba found nothing in Scotland to be restored, as the opponents of Episcopacy assert; but that he began a conversion there, and founded a monastery to carry it on, where his Monks (as many as took Orders) were ordained by the Bishops, properly so called, as the Monks were in all other countries.

These premises being laid down, the same writer thus proceeds to establish each of them; "What the Culdees were, their name sufficiently showeth." * * * "But then the question is concerning their antiquity. And for this, we must

not look so high as any writer I have mentioned in my history of Bishops. My latest Authors were, Bede and Nennius. But Bede wrote in the year 730. And Selden, who is (for aught I know) the first that brought this instance of the Culdees into controversy, yet acknowledgeth, that in Bede there is no mention of them. Nor are they mentioned in Nennius, who wrote about 120 years after: I should add, they are not mentioned for some hundreds of years after Bede. But because I may be mistaken, I shall name all those places, where I find they are mentioned by any writer till within these 200 years. First in Scotland, we read of no Culdees that were ever at Hy, or in any other place where the Scots anciently dwelt. But as often as they are mentioned, we find them still at St. Andrews, which was in the country of the South Picts, and they are not said to have been there, till it had been many years the See of a Diocesan Bishop. The See was removed hither from Abernethy, as the Scottish historians tell us, by Kenneth the Second, who died in the year 845. About a hundred years after this—namely in the year 943, Constantine the Third, King of the Scots, in Scotland, is said to have left his kingdom, and become Abbot of the Killidees or Kildees of St. Andrews. In the year 1108, Turgot, Prior of Durham, was made Bishop of St. Andrews, and continued seven years. 'In his days, all the rights of the KELEDEI throughout the whole Kingdom of Scotland, past into the Bishoprick of St. Andrews.' This is taken by M. Selden out of Durham History, which, he saith, is much later than Turgot's time. But whereas M. Selden fancies strange things of that right of the Kildees here mentioned, I guess it might have been the right of confirming the elections of all the Bishops in Scotland. This had been done by them, as being the Primate's Dean and Chapter; but was now taken from them, and performed

by the Primate himself. For this interpretation, I think there is ground enough in the account, that a Culdee of St. Andrews has given of the foundation of his church: where he says, that the Archbishoprick of all Scotland belongs to that city, and that no Bishop in Scotland ought to be ordained without the counsel of the Seniors of that place. In the year 1272, the Kildees of St. Andrews are mentioned by Silegrave in his Catalogue of the Religious houses in Britain. In the year 1297, November the third, the canons of St. Andrews elected William Lamberton Bishop; the Kildees there opposed the election, and their Provost, Aulmin, appealed to the Pope. But the Pope approved of the election; and so, for the future, the Kildees lost all the right they had before, saith our Author, meaning, (I suppose) all their right of electing the Archbishop, which belonged to them before, as being the Dean and Chapter of that See, (as the Abbots and Monks of St. Austin's were at Canterbury.) After this, in their place at St. Andrew's, there were brought in Canons Regular, to whose Prior was given the honour of preceding all the Abbots of Scotland, that is (as I take it,) they were made the Primate's Dean and Chapter for the future. This is all the credible account that I can find of any Culdees in Scotland."

"In Ireland, we read of Culdees at Armagh, who seem in like manner to have been anciently the Dean and Chapter of that church: but afterwards they also were fain to give place to Monks of a later institution, and yet were suffered to continue in the inferior quality of Vicars Choral. So Bishop Usher saith, the like in the (collegiate) church of Cluanish were called Colidei till our remembrance; and their Chief, who was called their Prior, served in the place of Præcentor. Bishop Usher also produces a sentence that was passed by an Archbishop of Armagh, in the year 1445;

and that (as it is said in the sentence itself,) upon search of the ancient Chronologies of the holy Fathers, and of the year-books of the Archbishops, his predecessors; that the office of a Prior, or an inferior Colidee, should not be accounted a cure for souls; but one might hold any Benefice with one of these offices, provided that he kept his due residence in the church of Armagh. Bishop Usher hath a Pope's Brief, that passed in the year 1447, containing, that the Priory of the college of Secular Priests, called *Colidei*, was not a Benefice, but a simple office and sinecure. Besides these, we read of no other Culdees, but those mentioned by Giraldus Cambrensis, who lived about the year 1200. He speaks of the Colidei in Bardsey, a little Island in North Wales, who were the most religious old monks in his age; and also speaks of the like in an Island in Tipperary, in Ireland, who there devoutly served in the chapel. These are all the writers in whom we have any mention of the Culdees: and this is all that I can find of them in any author, before the year of Christ, 1500—that is, till about a thousand years after the death of Palladius. And as none of these Authors makes them live near his time, much less (as some would have it) long before his coming into Scotland; so neither does any of them speak of their guiding the affairs of religion, either there, or in those other countries where they lived. If they did, we might expect it would have been rather in Ireland than any where else: for there they made the greatest figure: but there is nothing said of their governing there by any of these Authors: so hitherto we have nothing to prove, either their antiquity or their authority in the church."

On the other premises, which the learned Author lays down from whom the preceding extract has been taken, it is not necessary to delay; because each of his positions may

be easily established, by referring to the preceding part of the present history.

That the welfare of society greatly depends on the respect which is entertained for the marriage contract, is a truth universally acknowledged. To impress on their converts a lively sense of the importance of those doctrines, which Christianity teaches respecting matrimony, the first pastors of the Irish church devoted much attention. In Ireland, as in other countries, before the Gospel had been promulged, the prevailing notion of the obligations annexed to the connubial state of life, was at once gross and undefined. The Irish Princes, in particular, seem to have been addicted to an unconstrained and licentious polygamy. To attempt to induce the people to abstain from the same illicit indulgence, while their Rulers freely gave way to it, the first pastors of the Irish church perceived, would prove an unavailing labour. They, therefore, wisely exerted themselves, to impress strongly on the minds of the Irish Princes, the entire opposition of that vice to the precepts of the Gospel. In a Synod, which was held at an early period of the Irish church, the assembled Prelates solemnly admonished them; that so gross an indulgence defiled the soul, and strenghtened the propensity of the human heart to forbidden and criminal pursuits.*

The marriage contract, St. Patrick teaches, is sanctioned by the authority of God, and the engagement which is made before the minister of religion, is, according to the Apostle of Ireland, ratified in Heaven, in virtue of the promise, that whatsoever the Ministers of God should bind on earth, the same should be bound in Heaven also. But

* Quantam dignitatem acceperit rex, tantum timorem haberedebet; multæ enim mulieres animam ejus depravant, et animus ejus multitudine uxorum divisus in peccatum labitur. D'Achery, Spicil. Tom. 9. p. 16.

in the belief of the first converts to the Gospel in Ireland Christian matrimony was sanctified, not only because the celebration of the marriage contract was to be confided to the Minister of religion, but also because the matrimonial rite was assigned a place among the Sacraments of the New Law. The memorable words which St. Paul uses regarding matrimony, in his Epistle to the Ephesians—"This is a great Sacrament"—Sedulius, whose learning reflects so much honour on his native land, interprets in their literal signification, and he informs us, that besides the sacrament of matrimony, there are other sacraments also, but of inferior dignity.* Thus, if under the New Law, the obligations of the marriage state were peculiarly great, the converts to Christianity were consoled by the assurance, that the severity of the burden would be assuaged by the supporting grace, which Jesus Christ has annexed to the matrimonial engagement.

In the creed of the Catholic church, the Saviour, besides exalting matrimony to the dignity of a Sacramental rite, ordained, that the engagement, which that contract imposes, should be inviolably observed, until the death of either party should release the other from its obligation. Every temptation to instability being thus effectually excluded, religion and their own interest united together, to encourage those who engaged in the marriage state, to be faithful in the discharge of their respective duties. To enforce this salutary discipline, which, every day's experience shows, cannot be departed from, without deeply wounding the best interests of society, a canon of the Irish church strictly forbad the husband, even though his wife had dishonoured the marriage bed, to join in wedlock with

* "Sunt enim alia minora sacramenta."

another consort, whilst his first spouse was yet alive.* Neither did the discipline of the Irish church allow the husband to indulge in unnecessary severity, even when he wished to avenge the dishonour, which his wife had brought upon him. Should the unhappy woman repent, and desire to be reconciled to her husband, he was exhorted to receive her again under his protection. But then the nature of her crime demanded, that she should not henceforward enjoy the same rank, to which she was entitled, while she had practised conjugal fidelity. For an entire year, after her return under her husband's roof, she was excluded from the marriage bed; she served him in the humiliating condition of a bondsmaid, and received from him the measure of bread and water, which he allotted for her support. To deter the wife still more effectually from the commission of a crime so fatal to the happiness of her family, the censures of the church were also resorted to; and the woman, who dishonoured the marriage bed, was cut off by excommunication from the society of the faithful.†

When instructing the faithful who were engaged in the marriage state, the Apostle of nations exhorted them to the occasional practice of continency, that they might betimes devote themselves more fervently to the duty of prayer. The advice of the Apostle was earnestly recommended to their converts, by the early pastors of the Irish church. According to the austere discipline, which the fervour of primitive Christianity in Ireland had introduced, two days

* "Si alicujus uxor fornicata fuerit cum alio viro, non adducet aliam uxorem quamdiu viva fuerit uxor prima." Synod of St. Patrick, Canon 5.

† Canon 19, Synod St. Patrick. "In the same Synod, the excommunicated person is ordered to be rejected from communion and from table, mass and peace. This canon is illustrated by another of an Irish Synod, which distinguished six modes of excommunication; some greater, some lesser." Lanigan, Vol. 4, p. 377.

in each week were sanctified by a solemn fast. On these days, and during the lents which were observed in Ireland, and also on each sabbath and great festival throughout the year, the usage of the Irish church required, that continence should be observed by married persons. Besides the times here enumerated, a stated period before and after child birth was also prescribed, during which a like obligation was imposed on them.*

Sometimes, the piety of a married couple induced them, wholly to renounce every carnal gratification, and to devote themselves to the practice of perpetual celibacy. In this case, where so weighty an obligation was undertaken, the parties were accustomed to assume the religious habit, and were ordered to abstain from any intercourse, save that, which is allowed to a brother and sister, who dwell together under the same roof.†

While those who formerly professed the Gospel in Ireland, were taught to entertain the most exalted sentiments regarding Christian chastity, they were also instructed, that matrimony was ordained by God, and that they were to treat with becoming respect, their brethren who had engaged in the marriage state. The state of celibacy, the pastors of the Irish church declared, indeed, to be preferable to that of marriage; because while it left the heart disengaged from carnal affections, it also afforded more favourable opportunities, for attending to the concerns of eternal life. Yet in accordance with the doctrine of St. Paul, they moreover taught, that "Marriage is honourable;" and they strictly forbad those who practised virginity, either to treat married persons with disrespect, or to show in their discourse any abhorrence for the marriage state.‡

*D'Achery, from L. 44, Chap. 11. †Ibid.
‡ D'Achery, from L. 43, Cap. 2.

The marriage contract having been invested by Jesus Christ with a spiritual and sacramental character, which did not belong to it before the coming of the Redeemer, a certain authority to fix the conditions, that should accompany its celebration, was thereby imparted to the Chief Pastors of the Christian church. In the exercise of this authority, the ministers of religion were particularly solicitious, to point out the limits of relationship, within which propriety forbad the nuptial rite to be celebrated. By the light of reason alone, mankind had been taught, to condemn as unnatural, the intermarriage of persons, who were related in the first degree to one another. The spirit of the Christian religion encouraged the professors of the Gospel, to develop the moral truths, which the dictate of reason sanctioned. It was meet, that under so perfect a dispensation, the marriage contract should be regulated in such a manner, as would promote that sense of propriety, which nature itself inspires. It was, moreover, the grand prerogative of the Christian dispensation, to remove those barriers, by which, previously to the Gospel, mankind had been divided, and to unite all the children of Adam in the bonds of fraternal affection. These important ends, the discipline, which the Catholic church gradually annexed to the celebration of Christian matrimony, greatly contributed to advance. By this discipline, the impediments which natural propriety opposed to the intermarriage of persons who were related to each other, were multiplied; and those, whose affections would have been otherwise confined to the members of the sept or the clan, to which they themselves belonged, were thus obliged, to seek, outside these narrow limits, for partners, with whom they might engage in matrimony. Thus, oftentimes, alliances were formed, and friendships cemented between families, which, were it not for this salutary discipline, would have continued entirely estranged from one another.

The regulations of the church respecting the limits of relationship, within which marriage was prohibited, were, it is obvious, of a disciplinary character, and might be contracted or extended, as a change in the circumstances of individuals or of society required. At different periods, the church has accordingly varied her enactments regarding matrimony, and accommodated them to the exigencies of her children.* In this, as in other disciplinary arrangements, it is easy to conceive, that many circumstances might prevent the simultaneous adoption in different countries, of the same rules, regarding the celebration of the marriage contract.

I have judged these observations necessary, in order to exhibit a correct view of the accusations, which, at the period of the English invasion, and for some time previous to that event, were preferred against the Irish people, on account of their disregard of matrimonial regulations, which were observed in the English and Continental churches. If we believe some of the writers, by whom these complaints are preferred, the marriage contract was utterly despised by the Irish people, and a system of licentious intercourse between the sexes generally prevailed.

That the Danish invasions and the other civil misfortunes, which previously to the arrival of the English, disturbed the order of society in Ireland, caused the people to relax in their attention to the duties of religion, and gradually led to the introduction of a less strict morality, cannot be reasonably disputed. But, while this much is conceded, it will also appear from the following observations, that the prin-

* Thus at the period of the invasion, marriage could not be solemnized within the seven degrees of kindred, in England and the other principal countries of Europe: while, in Ireland, the impediment of kindred did not extend so far. In some time after the invasion, the impediment of kindred was confined, as at present, within the four degrees of relationship.

cipal charges preferred against the Irish nation, are to be attributed, in a great measure, to the prejudice and ignorance of the writers by whom they have been advanced.

In the mode of celebrating the marriage rite, as well as in the number of canonical impediments to matrimony, which the Irish church admitted, the usage, which she followed, at the time when these accusations were first preferred, differed, in some cases, from that, which then prevailed in the British and in the other principal churches of the West. But it would be repugnant alike to just reasoning and to the testimony of history, to deduce hence, that the marriage contract was disregarded by the Irish people. In effect, the falsity of such a conclusion must be obvious, if we refer to the enactments of the first Synod, which was held in Ireland, after the English invasion. Had the gross abuses, we now speak of, existed, they must have been known to the Prelates who composed that assembly; and if these had been acquainted with them, they would have then assuredly made mention of them: for, independently of the moral considerations, that would have obliged them to take notice of such licentiousness, the interests of Henry then required, that his friends should portray, in all its enormity, every abuse, by which religion was then dishonoured in Ireland. And, yet, the members of the Synod of Cashel, when treating upon matrimony, simply ordained, that henceforward, marriage should be celebrated according to ecclesiastical law; or, in other words, that the disciplinary regulations regarding matrimony, which then obtained in the other churches of the West, should be also adopted for the time to come in Ireland. Indeed, we only need refer to the exalted reputation for sanctity, which, even before the invasion, the Irish Clergy enjoyed among their English brethren, to be convinced, that the charges under consideration

were not founded in truth: for, abuses, such as these charges refer to, could never have generally prevailed in a church, over which a hierarchy of distinguished virtue presided.

That the Irish Hierarchy were thus distinguished, the letter, which St. Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, addressed to some of its principal members, supplies unquestioned evidence: "The sweet odour of your piety"—thus the English Primate speaks—"being many ways conveyed to me, I have resolved to unfold to you the tribulations, which I endure: in order, that, being better servants of God, than I am, you may more freely represent my necessities to him, and obtain by your charitable entreaties, the mercy which I require." The holy Prelate afterwards exhorts them, while he admits, at the same time, "that their rule of life and their wisdom were well regulated, to be watchful in enforcing discipline, and in defending the orthodox doctrine."

The language, in which Gilbert, a prelate, whose zeal obtained for him the praise and the friendship of St. Anselm, addressed himself to the Irish Clergy, shows, that he, too, entertained a high opinion of the fidelity, with which they discharged their duty to the people confided to their pastoral care. Gilbert's station in the Irish church—for after being promoted to the See of Limerick, he was honoured with the Legatine dignity—enabled that Prelate, to form a just estimate of the Irish Clergy; and his testimony is therefore entitled to particular attention.

Indeed, the very charges, that were preferred against the Irish people, imply, that the marriage contract was then validly celebrated in Ireland. In these charges, it was asserted, that the Irish dismissed their lawful wives, and cohabited with other women. Even if this accusation were true, it is clear, that those, who came under it, had previously to their misconduct, been engaged in lawful wedlock.

And if the marriage contract were duly solemnized in Ireland, even by such as afterwards violated its obligations, it is manifest, that it must have been also observed by those, who were not liable to a similar reproach.

The charges, to which these observations are designed as a reply, may, I have remarked, be traced, partly to the ignorance and prejudice of the writers who prefer them, and partly to the circumstance, that, some of the canonical impediments to matrimony, which were then received in other countries, had not been adopted so early in Ireland. To these causes may be added another, which had its origin in the peculiar mode of celebrating the marriage contract, that prevailed in Ireland, even for some time after the English had settled in that country.

In recent times, the marriage rite is usually conceived in words, which express the present actual consent of the parties, and which thus immediately perfect the contract.

In former ages, a different mode was frequently followed by persons who proposed to engage together in the marriage state. At a period, oftentimes long antecedent to that when the parties proposed to live together as husband and wife, they pledged their faith to each other in words, which expressed their intention of uniting in marriage, on some future occasion. In many cases, the consent thus given was made to depend for its fulfilment, on some contingency. If the contingency occurred, the parties then cohabited together as man and wife. But, if the condition on which the consent of the parties depended, were not accomplished, they then looked on themselves as free to engage with any others in the state of wedlock.

But though this mode of engaging in the marriage contract contains nothing, which of itself is reprehensible, it was yet found by experience, to be attended with manifold

inconveniencies. In virtue of an arrangement, made after the manner which has been now described, the contracting parties were conscientiously bound, to await the occurrence of the contingency, which was to perfect their engagement, and make it irrevocable. This conscientious obligation, the parties who incurred it, occasionally endeavoured to evade; and to accomplish their purpose, they, in some instances, entered into an absolute contract of matrimony with other persons, before the period arrived, which they were pledged to await, and thus they rendered themselves incapable of fulfilling their first engagement. To some, the marriage which was thus absolutely contracted, to the prejudice of a prior engagement, appeared utterly void; while others who censured it as illicit, pronounced it nevertheless to be indissoluble.

The consent, given to the marriage contract thus absolutely entered into, was, they observed, who asserted the validity of this engagement, explicit, actual, independent of every qualification, and, in fine, consummated by the immediate cohabitation of the contracting parties; while in the case, where the consent was made to depend on a future contingency, the promise should be considered as a pledge, that the parties would marry in time to come, rather than as an actual engagement in the bonds of matrimony. In a word, while in the one case, the consent *was actually given*, in the other, a promise only was made, that the consent *would be given* at a future period. To decline fulfilling this promissory engagement, was, indeed, sinful, and was therefore justly visited by the church with severe punishment. But, as the actual consent to matrimony had not been given, the violation of the engagement which had been entered into, could not be properly called a violation of the marriage contract.

That the usage of entering into what may be termed conditional matrimony prevailed for a long time in Ireland, cannot be controverted, and the adhesion of the Irish people to it, after it began to be disused by other nations, occasioned, it is likely, some of the English and French writers, to charge that people with the disregard of the marriage contract.

In the belief of the Catholic church, the separation which death effects does not interrupt the communion, which religion establishes among the children of the true faith. On the contrary, when the grave closes on its victim, there is still room, according to her doctrine, for the purest and the most disinterested exercise of charity. Then indeed, may the friendship and the affection, which are based upon religion, show forth their solicitude, by supplicating the Divine goodness, to relax the severity of justice, in behalf of those departed brethren, whom, some venial transgression, not expiated at the hour of death, or the temporal punishment due to forgiven sins, for which adequate satisfaction had not been performed, may retard from the attainment of the celestial beatitude. This consoling doctrine, the primitive Irish church, in common with all Christian antiquity, sedulously recommended to the attention of her children.

"Under the new dispensation," says an ancient Canon, "the church offers in many ways sacrifice to God—First, for herself—Secondly, in commemoration of Jesus Christ, who said, 'Do this for a commemoration of me'—And, Thirdly, for the souls of those who have departed from this life."* The doctrine contained in these words, we find more fully elucidated in another document, similar to that, from which the preceding passage has been extracted: For the†

* Ap. D'Achery, L. 2, Cap. 20.

† Synod of St. Patrick, Canon 12. Ap. Ware Opusc. S. P. p. 34.

very virtuous, who have departed from life, without being defiled with any stain of sin, the oblation (of the church) is offered in thanksgiving—for the very impious, who have died such, the same oblation is, to those who have survived them, a source of consolation—for the faithful, whose virtue was not wholly perfect at their departure from life, the oblation avails, to obtain for them the full remission of what is due to the Divine justice—and, finally, for those, who, at the hour of death, were not polluted with the guilt of any grievous transgressions, the oblation effects a mitigation of their punishment."

But while the Irish church was anxious, to supplicate the Divine mercy for such of her children, as had been called out of life, free indeed from the guilt of sin, but yet not sufficiently pure, to be admitted into that celestial mansion, "where nothing defiled can enter," she deemed the sacred oblation of the altar, to be of no avail to those unhappy persons, who, after they had grievously transgressed the Divine law, closed their earthly career in a state of final impenitence. "Hear," say the Fathers of an ancient Irish Council, "the Apostle declaring, 'there is a sin unto death: for that I say not that any man ask.' And the Lord himself 'has forbidden to give holy things to dogs.' For," these Fathers continue, "the man who deserves not to receive the sacrifice during life, how can he receive benefit from it, after death?"

From the doctrine of the Irish church respecting prayers for the dead, it necessarily follows, that she also held the same belief, which Catholics profess, with regard to Purgatory. The passages which have been above adduced, while they show, that she believed those unhappy souls who died under the guilt of mortal sin, to be doomed to everlasting punishment, prove, that she also taught, that others of her children, who though they had not departed in the same

unhappy state, yet were not sufficiently pure to be at once admitted into the Divine presence, underwent a transitory purgation, the severity of which might be alleviated by the prayers of their brethren upon earth.

But if the first pastors of the Irish church taught, that those who suffered in Purgatory, might receive comfort from the prayers and good works of their brethren upon earth, they also encouraged their children, who had still to contend against the infirmities of life, to expect, that in their turn, they, too, would be aided in the spiritual warfare, by the charity of the faithful, who were placed in the enjoyment of eternal beatitude. The Saints who reposed in the Heavenly Jerusalem, were the special favourites of the Most High. The merits of the Saviour's redemption had been efficacious in their regard, and these were now numbered among the chosen children of God. They had endured the various tribulations, that belong to the present state of probation, and their charity could not be indifferent about their fellow creatures upon earth, with whom they were connected by the most endearing relations, and whose salvation was still exposed to peril. One common Mediator was indeed appointed for all: and by his merits alone could man be saved. But the Saints had been the faithful imitators of the Saviour's virtues. With him, therefore, their prayers could not be unacceptable; and when offered up to the Eternal Father through him, they could not be unavailing.

From the distinguished part, which, in the commencement of the ninth century, Dungal, an Irish Monk, took in the controversies, which then troubled the peace of Italy, we may securely learn, what the doctrine of the church of Ireland was, on the invocation of Saints, and the respect due to their relicks, and sacred images. The desolation, which the ravages of the Danes had spread in those times

throughout every part of Ireland, forced many of the natives, especially those who had engaged in a religious state of life, to seek for shelter in a foreign land. Of this number Dungal appears to have been one. Having, at first, taken up his abode in France, he afterwards retired to Italy, where he soon became conspicuous, by the number of students, who resorted to Pavia, in order to profit of his instructions. He had not been long settled here, when the conduct of Claudius, who had been recently appointed to the See of Turin, attracted his attention.

Claudius commenced his administration, by destroying or removing the images and crosses, which were erected in the churches of his diocess. The Abbot Theodimir, who had hitherto enjoyed the friendship of Claudius, immediately remonstrated with the Bishop, on so extraordinary a proceeding. In answer to the Abbot's remonstrance, Claudius wrote an Apology against Theodimir, in which he denounced, as inconsistent with orthodoxy, the doctrine, which sanctioned the veneration of images, or the invocation of the Saints. The Apology of Claudius was replied to by Dungal. His reply, Dungal prefaces with the observation, "that the question at issue was not, whether divine honour should be paid to the Saints, or to their images: for, there was no one who would advocate so extravagant a doctrine." The antiquity of the usage, which allowed images to be placed in churches, Dungal then establishes, by adducing various passages from the writings of St. Paulinus, the illustrious Bishop of Nola; and he asserts, "that the opinion of Claudius, respecting the Saints, was but a revival of the errors, for which Eunomius and Vigilantius had been condemned. With regard to the cross," continues Dungal, "all Christians, after the example of the Apostle, place their glory in it: Nor did the Saviour intend, that his pas-

sion should be concealed from the faithful, as if it were something ignominious; but he, on the contrary, desired, that the remembrance of it should be unceasingly renewed in the church."

In proof of the veneration, which the faithful, in every age, paid to the cross, Dungal refers to numerous authorities, and appeals confidently to the evidence which these supply, in favour of the doctrine, which he defends. Then resuming that part of the controversy, which related to the invocation of Saints, he asks, "if the Apostles and Martyrs, while in this world, could pray for others, how much more so can they do it, after their crowns, victories, and triumphs?" He concludes, by asserting, that holy pictures, the cross, and the relicks of the Saints, are entitled to a becoming reverence, but not to that worship which is due to God alone; and he maintains, that Claudius, by rejecting the cross, declares himself an enemy of the Saviour's passion and Incarnation. "The Jews, therefore," Dungal adds, "praise Claudius, and call him the wisest of Christians; and he, in return, extols the Jews and the Saracens. How," exclaims this learned recluse, "can a Bishop, who abhors the cross of Jesus Christ, perform the ecclesiastical functions—baptize, bless the holy Chrism, impose hands, give certain benedictions, or celebrate mass? For, as St. Augustin observes, none of these functions can be duly exercised without making the sign of the cross." In the subsequent part of his reply, Dungal censures the impiety of Claudius, because this Prelate did not allow the commemoration of the Saints, in the litanies, and in the other offices of the church, or in the celebration of their festivals.

In the history of the Irish church, many instances occur, which illustrate the doctrine professed by her, respecting the veneration due to the relicks of the Saints. From these I

shall select at present the following: During the incursions of the Danes, the remains of St. Brigid and St. Columba were, we have seen, transferred to Down, and placed in the same grave with those of the illustrious Apostle of Ireland. The memory of this event was indeed faithfully preserved; but the recollection of the particular spot, where the sacred relicks of these three holy personages lay, became gradually obliterated from the minds both of the Clergy and people. It would seem probable, that care had been taken, to confine the knowledge of this circumstance, to a few persons only: for, had it been generally disseminated throughout the country, it must, in a short time, have reached the Danes, whose savage impiety appeared particularly to delight, in dishonouring the relicks of the Saints.

The extraordinary veneration which St. Malachy entertained for St. Patrick, St. Brigid, and St. Columba, made him anxious, to discover the grave, where the bodies of these holy persons reposed. But every effort, which his ingenuity could devise, proved unavailing: for no memorial remained, which could assist him in the inquiry. All human means having failed, the good Bishop had recourse to prayer, and, with a holy importunity, he earnestly besought God, to make known to him the place, in which the earthly remains of these three distinguished favourites of Heaven were deposited. The prayer of the venerable Prelate was, at length, favourably heard. On a certain night while he offered up in the church his fervent petition to the Almighty, a ray of light, like a sun-beam, was seen by him to pass along the church, until it reached a particular part of the temple, when it ceased to advance. Persuaded, that Heaven had chosen this mode, to reveal to him the subject, which he so ardently desired to know, St. Malachy caused the place, to which his attention had been thus drawn, to be

immediately examined. His exertions were rewarded with the success, which they so well deserved: for when the earth was removed, the bodies of the three Saints were found deposited together in the same grave. By the Bishop's directions, the precious remains were then raised up, and placed in coffins, which he had provided for them. As soon as this ceremony was completed, the bodies were then consigned to the same tomb. De Courcy, the Lord of Down, being informed by the Bishop of what had taken place, it was resolved, that messengers should be sent to the Holy See, to solicit permission, to remove these sacred relicks from the grave, where they reposed, to a more honourable part of the church. Urban the Third then filled St. Peter's chair, and it happened, that De Courçy and St. Malachy were both personally known to him. That Pontiff received their petition favourably, and immediately ordered Vivian, the Cardinal Priest of St. Stephen, to repair to Ireland, and assist at the celebration of the intended ceremony. The day fixed for the performance of the sacred rite was that, on which the church honours the memory of St. Columba. On that day, the venerable remains of the three most illustrious Saints of Ireland were accordingly transferred with the usual solemnities to the place, which had been prepared for them. At the ceremony, fifteen Bishops and a numerous assemblage of other Ecclesiasticks attended; and in order that the memory of this interesting event might be preserved, they ordained, that the anniversary of the translation should be kept henceforward, as a solemn festival, throughout the church of Ireland.*

* While treating on the veneration due to relicks, I may allude to a species of relick, called the Staff of Jesus, which, for a long time, was held in great respect in Ireland, because, it was supposed to have been used by St. Patrick. The more ancient of St. Patrick's biographers do not, however, make any mention of this Staff. St. Bernard alludes to it, and says, that it was richly ornamented.

CHAPTER IX.

Euchological Ceremonies—Coronation of Kings—Inauguration of Knights—Dedication of Churches—Liturgy—Seminaries for Education, Literature, and learned men.

In the preceding pages, the reader has seen evidence of the zeal, with which a member of the Irish church vindicated, in the ninth century, the Catholic doctrine, respecting the honour due to the relicks of the Saints, and to sacred images. With his defence of the orthodox faith the same learned writer has intermixed many observations, which show the great similarity of the present ceremonial of the Catholic church, to that which was followed by the ancient professors of Christianity in Ireland. To baptize, to bless the holy Chrism, to impose hands, to give certain benedictions, to celebrate Mass, Dungal enumerates among the ecclesiastical functions, which it belongs to a Bishop to perform. "And these functions," he asks, "how can a Bishop perform, who abhors the Cross of Jesus Christ?" "For," he continues, "according to St. Augustine, none of these duties can be duly discharged, without making the

When St. Malachy became Primate, Nigellus, who had usurped the Primatial See, carried it away from Armagh; and such was the importance attached to the possession of it, that many persons in consequence adhered to the usurper. But Nigellus did not retain it long—it was again restored to Armagh. In the time of Giraldus Cambrensis, it was removed to Dublin, and kept with great care in the church of the Blessed Trinity, till the suppression of the monasteries. In the year 1538, it was destroyed by fire.

sign of the cross." With the like energy, he denounces Claudius as guilty of impiety, in forbidding the Saints to be commemorated in the offices of the church, and in refusing to celebrate the festivals set apart in honour of them. To these charges against his adversary, Dungal also adds, "that Claudius disapproved of the usage, which ordained, that tapers should be lighted in the churches, during the day, while the sacred offices of religion were being celebrated."

In the course of the present history, various incidents have been introduced, which confirm the inference, deduced from the writings of Dungal. It was, we have seen, by the expressive ceremony of lighting the Paschal fire, that St. Patrick first attracted the notice of King Leogaire, and obtained an opportunity to inform that Monarch, of the sacred tidings of man's redemption. In the several accounts, that have been transmitted to us of the manner in which the obsequies of the Apostle of Ireland were performed, we may also discover many defined vestiges of the rites, which the Catholic church still uses in her solemn offices, for the faithful departed.*

The Epistle, which the Saint himself wrote against Coroticus, makes mention of some of the principal ceremonies, which were used in the administration of baptism. While the Saint was engaged in his missionary labours in the southern province of Ireland, a band of freebooters, under the command of a Prince, by name Coroticus, landed at one of the maritime districts of Munster. Having disembarked, they commenced, without delay, to plunder the adjoining country, and to make captives of such of the unhappy natives, as had the misfortune to be met by them.

* "Clerici enim Hiberniæ confluebant ad celebrandas exequias Patricii undique." Fiech's Hymn; Stroph. 31.

It happened, that St. Patrick had just baptized and confirmed a considerable number of converts in the same vicinity, in which the marauders carried on the work of devastation. Of these converts, several were inhumanly murdered by the savage assailants, while many others were carried off and consigned to slavery in Britain.

The Saint, overwhelmed with grief for the loss of his spiritual children, resolved to leave no effort untried, to recover such of them as still survived, and were enduring in exile the hardships of captivity. With this view, he addressed a letter to Coroticus, exhorting that Prince to repent of his cruelty towards an unoffending people, and entreating him to restore the captives and the property, that were unjustly detained by him. To give effect to his remonstrance, he confided the delivery of the letter to a Priest and a certain number of ecclesiasticks, whom he selected for the occasion. Coroticus treated the letter and those who conveyed it with the utmost disdain. St. Patrick being informed of the indignity, with which his remonstrance was received, excommunicated that Prince and all those who assisted in the recent outrage, which had been committed in Ireland. In the sentence of excommunication, which the Saint denounced, he declares, that these unhappy criminals were cut off from the society of the faithful, and estranged from Christ; that the faithful should, therefore, hold no communication with them—should not eat or drink with them, or even receive offerings from them—until due atonement were first made by them to God, and the innocent persons, who were unjustly detained in slavery, were restored to their country and their friends.

With the result of this proceeding, none of the Saint's biographers have informed us. It seems, indeed, improbable, that a Prince of Coroticus' character would be influ-

enced by any consideration of a merely religious nature. Yet, as there were among his followers, some who professed themselves Christians, the denunciation of the Saint may have had a salutary influence in their regard. The Epistle which St. Patrick addressed to Coroticus, is deserving of notice here, on account of the information, which it supplies, respecting the ceremonies, that were used by the early pastors of the Irish church in the celebration of baptism. In it, the holy Bishop feelingly deplores the loss of his beloved children, of whom he was deprived "on the very day, after he had begotten them to God, and *confirmed* them in Christ, and whilst they were yet clothed in white robes, and the Chrism still gleamed upon their foreheads."

But it was not in the celebration of those ceremonies only which are immediately connected with the Christian worship, that the Irish church showed her solicitude for the spiritual welfare of her children. With parental care, she, moreover, laboured to sanctify by her rites the several institutions, which civil society had introduced into Ireland. This happy intermixture of the offices of religion with those of the state, while it served to promote the piety of the faithful, exercised also a considerable influence on the temporal welfare of the kingdom. On those, more especially, on whom the honours of civil society devolved, the usage, we now speak of, was calculated to produce a salutary impression. By the religious rites, which accompanied their elevation to rank, or authority, they were reminded, "that all power came from God," and that the power, which God bestowed, was to be employed for those legitimate ends only, for which it had been ordained. For the conscientious exercise of the authority confided to him, religion proclaimed, that every Superior, however he might be denominated, would be accountable to the Most High, and should answer for the solemn trust at the risk of his own salvation.

In every important proceeding that related to civil society in Ireland, a principal place was assigned to the Ministers of religion.* The rite, according to which the inauguration of the Kings of Ireland was celebrated, appears to have descended from a period, anterior to that, of the conversion of the Irish people. On a stone, bearing the expressive name of the "stone of destiny," which, with scrupulous care, had been transmitted from age to age, for many generations, the King took his seat, when the ceremony of his inauguration was about to be performed. The place chosen for the celebration of this rite was ordinarily the summit of a hill. When the Monarch elect had ascended the hill, he proceeded to the spot, where the stone of destiny was fixed. Then taking his place on the stone, he stood erect upon it, and solemnly swore, that he would preserve inviolate all the ancient customs of the realm, and transmit the sceptre peaceably to his Tanist. A wand, the emblem of authority, was next placed in the hands of the newly elected Sovereign, and the ceremony of his inauguration was thus concluded.

As soon as Christianity was diffused throughout Ireland, the aid of religion was called in, to give increased solemnity to the inauguration of the Irish Sovereign. In the history of Columbkill, an occurrence is related, which shows, that that Saint was not a stranger to the rites, which it belonged to the Minister of religion to use in the inauguration of a King. With the knowledge of these rites, Columba must have become acquainted in his native country: for, in the history of his missionary career in Scotland, nothing is recorded, from which we could infer,

* Thus even in the administration of justice, an ancient canon decreed—that if any fact is to be proved, it shall be attested on the Four Evangelists, before taking the communion, and afterwards the credibility of the witnesses shall be left to the Judge. Ware's Antiquit. fol. 152.

that he had learned here the ceremony prescribed on such an occasion. During the sojourn of the Saint at Hymba, he beheld, in a vision of the night, an Angel, who presented a book before him, which was entitled, "The Glass-book of the ordination of Kings." In obedience to the orders, which he received from the same Angel, he read over the volume, which had been thus presented to him. As soon as he had complied with this injunction, the Angel next commanded him to ordain Aidan, a King, according to the rite, appointed in the work, which he had just now read. In the judgment of Columbkill, Eugene was more worthy than his brother Aidan, of so great an honour. So strong was the Saint's conviction respecting the superior claims of Eugene to the sceptre, that he refused to obey the command, which the Angel had given respecting Aidan. His disobedience was visited with immediate punishment. The Angel then a second time renewed the orders, which he had previously issued, and warning Columbkill, that these orders were sanctioned by the Divine authority, he threatened to reiterate the punishment, if the Abbot persisted in his first resolve. For a while, Columba still hesitated as to the course he should pursue. The visit of the Angel was a third time repeated, and the reluctance of the Saint being at length subdued, he promised to execute with fidelity the duty imposed upon him. Aidan having arrived soon after in the Island, Columba, in compliance with the engagement he had undertaken, imposed hands on the Prince's head, and imparting to him his benediction, inaugurated him into the Kingly office.*

This solemn inauguration of the Irish Kings was faithfully observed, until the era, when the sceptre of Ireland

* Martene says, that the inauguration of Aidan is the most ancient instance he has met with of the benediction or inauguration of Kings in Christian times.

passed from Malachy the Second into the hands of Brian Boroimhe. After the defeat of Malachy, the anciently established system of succession to the throne was overturned, and a number of ambitious chieftains arose, who aimed at the Supreme Sovereignty of the kingdom. Thus a never failing source of jealousy and contention was thrown open, and the energies of the nation were gradually wasted in the petty strifes of aspirants after Royalty. The prescribed form of inauguration thus gradually fell into disuse; and, "without being anointed with the unction, which religion had consecrated, without being supported by any right of inheritance, or by any legitimate claim of succession, the royal sceptre of Ireland was grasped by men, whose only title consisted in the number and violence of their adherents."*

The unsettled state of society, which was caused by the dissolution of the Roman Empire, contributed to make the profession of arms be regarded as one, which, while highly honourable, was also eminently useful to the civil community. To reward the services of those, who had become distinguished by their military achievements, and to excite others to emulate their heroism, was a duty, which his own interest sufficiently recommended to the attention of every Sovereign. Among the honours, which awaited the soldier, who had signalized himself by deeds of valour, the distinction of knighthood was the most ordinary. When admitted to this dignity, the knight became entitled to associate with the most illustrious personages in society, and he might look forward to the enjoyment of the most exalted offices of the state.

* Isti reges non fuerunt ordinati solemnitate alicujus ordinis, nec unctionis sacramento, vel aliqua proprietatis successione; sed vi et armis, quilibet regnum suum obtinuit. Davis' Historic. relic. p. 10.

A distinction, similar to that of knighthood, appears to have been known in Ireland, even before the Christian era. To this distinction, the greatest importance was attached; and the Sons of the Kings of Ireland esteemed it an honour, worthy of their acceptance. In those civil or military institutions, which were not opposed to religion, the Gospel did not interfere. The care of the first preachers of Christianity was, on the contrary, employed, in connecting the authority of religion, with the legitimate usages which society had adopted. Society, revelation proclaimed, derived its origin from the decree of Heaven. To heaven it must have been then pleasing, that under the sanction of religion, those rites should be celebrated, which were designed to give strength and beauty to the social edifice. The performance of these rites, by the consecrated Ministers of the sanctuary, in the temples set apart for the Divine worship, while it conveyed to the Magistrate who was exalted into authority, the important lesson that all power came from above, taught those also, who were to be placed in subjection to him, that to resist his commands would be to oppose the ordinance of God. The sanction, which religion lent to the solemnity, by which the Chief Magistrate was inaugurated into office, it also not unfrequently employed, to honour such as were rewarded, with any of the other honourable distinctions of society.

That in Ireland, after the Gospel had been established there, the form of conferring knighthood was accompanied with certain religious ceremonies, after the custom of England and the other Christian nations of Europe, appears very probable: for, to pass over the other arguments, that favour this conjecture, it is related of the knights, whom O'Brien,*

* It was this Monarch, who enabled the Irish Monks of the monastery of St. Peter, at Ratisbon, to found there also the noble monastery of St. James.

the Sovereign of Munster, sent to assist Lothaire, King of the Romans, that their armorial bearings were distinguished by the blazon of the Cross.

When the Temple of Jerusalem was erected, the people of God assembled together, to solemnize with becoming devotion the dedication of that august edifice. The piety of the primitive converts to the Gospel, emulated the example of their predecessors under the Mosaic dispensation; and they, too, eagerly crowded, to assist at the solemn ceremonies, which were used in the consecration of the first Christian churches. From the remotest period of Christianity in Ireland, the usage had been introduced, that, before a church were set apart for the public offices of religion, it should be previously consecrated, by the Bishop of the diocess, in which it was situated.*

In common with another received custom of the Catholic church, it was usual in Ireland, to deposit in churches, the relicks of the Saints. In one of the churches, which, during his mission there, Palladius had erected, we find that he deposited some of the sacred relicks, which, at his departure from Rome, he had received from Pope Celestine. Neither would the piety of the ancient professors of Christianity in Ireland, suffer the relicks of the Saints, to be consigned, even in the churches, to the same grave, with the remains of the other faithful. They, on the contrary, deemed it a religious duty, to honour the relicks of the Saints, with an extraordinary reverence, and they delighted to indulge their devotion, in adorning the shrines, where the bodies of these chosen children of Heaven reposed.

Besides the other decorations, with which the church

* Si quis presbyterorum ecclesiam ædificaverit, non offerat antequam adducat suum Pontificem, ut eam consecret, quia sic decet. Synod. St. Patric. Auxil. et Issernin.

of Kildare was adorned, the shrines of Brigid and St. Conlath, a writer of the ninth century assures us, were ornamented with wrought gold and silver, with gems and precious stones, and with crowns of gold and silver, which were suspended over them. In the account, which is given of the ceremonies observed at the funeral procession of Brian Boroimhe, it is related, that the Archbishop of Armagh, accompanied by his Clergy and by numbers of other persons, came bearing sacred relicks to meet the remains of that Monarch, and that when the corpse was conveyed to Armagh, the obsequies were celebrated for twelve days and twelve nights, during which time, the relicks of St. Patrick, which were preserved there in the church, were constantly exposed to the veneration of the faithful.

In the history of St. Gallus, an Irish Priest, who, in the seventh century, preached the Gospel in Germany, we are informed, that the Saint having entered into a temple at Bregentz, in which idols were worshipped, he exhorted the people to receive the Gospel; and that to prove the folly of the popular superstition, he broke in pieces the images and threw them into the lake. Many of his auditors having been thus induced to embrace the Gospel, St. Gallus resolved to convert the Pagan temple into a Christian church. He accordingly called for water, and blessing it, he sprinkled the temple with it. Next, going in procession around the edifice, he recited the usual prayers, which are appointed for the dedication of a church. Besides the other rites, which he observed on this occasion, his biographer tells us, that the Saint anointed the altar, and placed there the relicks of St. Aurelia.*

When Gilbert, who governed the See of Limerick in the twelfth century, was appointed Apostolick Legate for Ire-

* Walafrid. Strab. Vit. S. Galli.

land, he employed his zeal in labouring to introduce uniformity in the ritual observances of the Irish church. To secure the adoption of the same liturgy throughout Ireland, appeared to him an object of the utmost importance: and in his solicitude to accomplish this disciplinary improvement, Gilbert did not hesitate to denounce the permission of different liturgies, as incompatible with the maintenance of ecclesiastical unity. But in advancing this assertion, Gilbert appears to have forgotten, that in every age, since the foundation of the Catholic church, a variety of liturgies has been permitted. That this permission was carried, in the time of Gilbert, to an inconvenient extent in Ireland, cannot be questioned. But experience proves that when a usage is not inconsistent with any authorized enactment, it is always more conducive to the publick welfare, to apply a gentle rather than a strong remedy to the inconvenience, which may be hence occasioned. It happened so in the instance now under consideration.

While the denunciations of Gilbert contributed but little, to effect the change, which he so much wished for, the mild and judicious exertions of St. Malachy succeeded in introducing a desirable uniformity in the liturgical and ritual observances of the Irish church. Indeed, so generally were the Roman liturgy and offices adopted in the time of St. Malachy throughout the kingdom, that on this point, even Giraldus Cambrensis, who pointed out with eagerness every deviation of the Irish church from the rubrics, that were followed in Britain, has not ventured to advance any accusation against the Clergy of Ireland.

For, perhaps, the greater part of two centuries, after her foundation, the Irish church continued to use the liturgy, which St. Patrick had brought with him from Gaul to Ireland. Even until a still more recent period, St. Comgall

and his disciple, St. Columbanus, also adhered to the liturgical form, which the Irish church had first adopted. It was towards the close of the sixth century, that the Gallician liturgy, which differed, in some ritual points only, from that previously in use, was introduced into Ireland. But, though the new formulary was admitted, the ancient liturgy was also still followed by those who desired to adhere to it. These two liturgies differed, I have remarked, in some ritual points only. In truth, the sole discrepancy between them, which Jonas, a writer of the eighth century, notices, consists in this, that in the liturgy of Columbanus, there were several orisons, or collects, while in that, which was used in the seventh century in Gaul, one prayer only was contained.

The variety, which the use of different liturgies occasioned in the ceremonial of the Irish church, appears to have been augmented by the introduction of the religious institutes, which, in more recent times, began to be established in Ireland: for, then as at the present day, these institutes were distinguished from each other, by the diversity of their disciplinary and ritual observances.

The inconvenience, that arose from the variety of offices, which were received in many parts of the Western church, attracted the attention of Pope Gregory the Seventh, and that illustrious Pontiff exerted his wonted energy, in endeavouring to remove it. By the influence of his authority, the Roman office was gradually substituted for the other offices, that were previously used in many parts of the West.

The motives, which influenced the Pontiff, were duly appreciated by the other Prelates of the Western church, and especially by St. Anselm, the Archbishop of Canterbury. St. Anselm had been acquainted with Gilbert in France. After his promotion, a friendly correspondence was carried on between them, in which the English Primate exhorted Gilbert, to labour, in promoting in the Irish church

those practices, which were deserving of approbation. This exhortation, given by a Prelate, who was then universally admired for his sanctity and zeal, encouraged Gilbert to compose his treatise "on Ecclesiastical order." From the notices, that remain of this treatise, it appears to have been little else than a copy of the Roman liturgy and office. These alone, the Author contended, ought to be observed throughout the Irish church. His recommendation was not, however, successful. But, what the too ardent zeal of Gilbert could only partially accomplish, was effected by the superior prudence of St. Malachy. The exertions of St. Malachy were supported by the Synod of Cashel, in which it was enacted, that the same ritual rules should be observed in Ireland, which were followed by the holy church, and which were practised in England.

St. Malachy, however, was sensible, that the cause of religion would be advanced but little, by the introduction of a mere uniformity in the ceremonial of religious worship. It was, he felt persuaded, of the utmost importance also, that the canonical office should be regularly celebrated with all the solemnities, which the Catholic ritual prescribes. For some time before his elevation to the Episcopal dignity, a relaxation in the usage of singing the canonical hours had partially prevailed in certain portions of the Irish church. This neglect, the Saint endeavoured to repair, especially in the churches which were subject to his own immediate jurisdiction. By his care, also, the Gregorian chant was substituted for the ancient Gallician, in those churches, where the latter still prevailed: for, in some of the Irish churches, the Roman chant had been practised, it is probable, even so early as the close of the seventh century—the period, when it became generally received in England.*

* It has been conjectured, and with every appearance of truth, that the Mis-

The Bardic institution comprised, we have seen, a numerous and an important portion of the community, at the period, when St. Patrick commenced his missionary career in Ireland. From the nature of the avocations, which were assigned to this order, it is manifest, that the Bards must have been acquainted with more than the elementary departments of learning. The first care of St. Patrick, as soon as he had made some converts to the Gospel, was employed in selecting for the sacred Ministry, such of the Neophytes, as, by their piety and education, appeared qualified for the discharge of so important an office. Happily, some members of the Bardic institute were among the first, both to profess their belief in the Gospel, and to evince a disposition, to labour with the Saint in the conversion of their countrymen. In qualifying themselves for the sacred Ministry, they were, however, embarrassed by one difficulty, of no ordinary magnitude. But, by the instructions of the Missionaries, and by their own exertions, this impediment was soon removed. The form of the letters and characters of the Irish language, differed altogether from that after which the Roman alphabet was modelled. It therefore became necessary, that the candidates for the Christian Ministry should be initiated in the knowledge of the Roman

sal, found by Mabillon, at Bobbio, contains the liturgy, which the Irish church first used. Mabillon admits, that this Missal must have been written 1000 years before his time; and as the form of the letters and the orthography agree with the peculiar form and the still more peculiar orthography, which distinguish the old Irish manuscripts, it must have been copied by an Irishman, and was, therefore, we may presume, intended for the use of Irish Priests. This Missal contains the Masses for the principal festivals of the year, and for the festivals of some of the Saints—two Masses for the dead, &c. &c. The canon agrees in every important respect, with that of the Roman Missal. The Penitential annexed to this Missal agrees very nearly with that, which was composed by St. Columbanus, a circumstance, which gives additional probability to the opinion, that the Missal belonged to the Community, which that Saint established at Bobbio.

alphabet, before they could attain the learning, which the Priesthood required. By the Missionaries, and by those who were instructed by them, the knowledge of the Roman letters was soon diffused throughout the kingdom, and an avenue opened to the literature of foreign countries. Nor were the Irish people slow to profit of the important advantage, which Christianity thus conferred upon them. Within the short space of a single century after their conversion, numerous schools were established* in different parts of Ireland, and many Irishmen attained, even in distant regions, the highest reputation for learning.

Of the seminaries founded in the sixth century, those of Clonard and Bangor are entitled to particular notice. The establishment at Clonard owes its origin to St. Finnian. In his youth, St. Finnian had been placed under the care of a Bishop, by name Fortkern. Having attained to man's estate, he left his native country, and passing over into Britain, became acquainted with David, Gildas, and Cathmael, each of whom had then attained a high reputation for sanctity and learning. After the lapse of some time, Finnian returned to Ireland. For seven years after his return, he employed himself in the study of the sacred Scriptures, and in instructing others in the knowledge of them. It was after he had thus attained a high reputation for learning, that he formed the monastery of Clonard. His lectures in this new institution were attended by a numerous concourse of students, and by many other distinguished persons also, who wished

* Even before the close of the fifth century, eight ecclesiastical schools and seminaries were founded and governed by the following Prelates, viz.: The school of Emily, by Ailbe; of Armagh, by Benignus; of Ardagh, by Mel; of Louth, by Moctheus; of Beg-erin, by Ibar: of Antrim, by Mochay; of Derkan, by Olcan. In the Life of Moctheus, this holy man is styled, Pater egregiæ familiæ—Lucerna Lugmadensium. AA. SS. p. 732. Of Ibar it is said; Celebre condidit cœnobium, et sacras ipidem literas, aliasque artes optimas docuit maximam multitudinem Hibermorum et Aliorum. Usher, p. 1061.

to profit by his spiritual advice. In the number of his pupils, Finnian reckoned St. Columbkill.* In the history of this illustrious Saint, we have seen, that while his exertions were primarily directed, to advance the cause of the Gospel, he was not unmindful of the interests of learning. By his influence, the Bardic order was rescued from destruction; and under his direction, the important and useful occupation of transcribing for posterity the learned works of preceding ages, was scrupulously attended to, by the Monks of Hy. To the Monks of Hy, the people of Northumbria owed their conversion to Christianity, and also the literary advantages, which the institution erected by Aidan at Lindisfarne conferred upon them.

Even at the early period we now treat of, students began to resort from Britain to Ireland, for the benefit of education. Of these, Gildas and Petrocus are particularly mentioned by our ancient writers. Gildas, before he came to Ireland, had devoted himself for some years to the cultivation of letters. Wishing, however, to improve himself still more in philosophy and theology, he repaired to Ireland. There, his proficiency attracted the attention of his Superiors, and he was honoured with an appointment to a professorship, in the celebrated school of Armagh.† Of Petrocus, from whom

* Besides St. Columbkill, two distinguished Ecclesiasticks, named Kieran and Columb, of Tridaglass, studied under St. Finnian. Clonard was devastated by the Danes in 888. It became one of the fixed Sees of Meath in 1118. Duleck became another at the same time. Eugene, Bishop of Clonard, who died in 1194, assumed the title of Bishop of Meath, which has been since retained. In 1206, the See was removed to Newtown. The possessions of the Nunnery of Clonard were confirmed by the Pope in 1195. Another Bishop of the name of Finnian lived in the same century, who studied first under Nennio in Britain, and afterwards at Rome. This Prelate also founded a religious and literary institution at Moville about the year 540. I may here add, that Kieran and Brendan, two pupils of St. Finnian of Clonard, founded two establishments of considerable note—the former at Clonmacnois, the latter at Birr.

† Gildas Britonum historigraphus tunc remanens in Hibernia, studium regens et prædicans in civitate Ardmaca. Caradoc. Vit. Gild.

Padstow derives its name, we are told, that he devoted twenty years in Ireland to the study of general literature, and of the sacred Scriptures, that he assiduously attended the lectures of masters, who were eminent for learning, and that he then returned home, to distribute to his countrymen the intellectual treasures, which he had there acquired.*

In his Life of St. Malachy, a short but glowing description of the institution at Bangor has been given by St. Bernard. "Under its first founder, Comgall, Bangor," says the Saint, "became most illustrious; it was the parent of many thousand monks, and presided over many monasteries. It was a holy place, indeed, and fruitful in Saints, whom it brought forth to God with such extraordinary fecundity, that Lunanus, one of the children of that Saintly institute, is said to have founded and governed one hundred monasteries. The affiliations from the parent stock were so numerous, that they filled Ireland and Scotland. Nor did these holy men confine themselves to Ireland and Scotland alone; but, in swarms, they spread, like an inundation, over foreign countries also. Of their number was Columbanus, who founded the monastery at Luxeu, and became there the parent of a mighty family. I have said thus much, to commemorate the ancient glory of the monastery of Bangor."†

* Usher, p. 564, and Ind. Chron. ad. A. 518.

† Vit. St. Malach. Chap. 5. Bangor was founded in 559 by St. Comgall. Three thousand Monks, it is said, obeyed his spiritual authority. In 812 and 823, it was plundered by the Danes. On one of these occasions, St. Bernard states, that 900 Monks were killed. In the early part of the twelfth century, and for a considerable time previously, Bangor was in a state of utter ruin. By St. Malachy's exertions, it was at length re-established. The Saint built there an oratory of stone. The expense of the structure was considerable, because, at that time, stone buildings were not common in Ireland. Some, however, of the most ancient of the Irish churches were built of stone: the church of Cormac, for example, at Cashel, and the still more ancient one of Dulcek. The church of Cormac was built about the close of the ninth century.

With the history of St. Columbanus, the reader is already acquainted. If I refer to that history now, it is in order to show, that, while the members of the monastick institute in Ireland practised the most perfect virtue, they also cultivated with success the study of sacred and profane letters.

Of the works composed by Columbanus, several are extant, and these attest the extent and elegance of his attainments, and his familiar acquaintance with the polite literature of Greece and Rome. Among them is a poetical epistle, which the Saint composed at the age of seventy-two, and which, for the classic beauty of its composition, is particularly deserving of attention. From this production, I shall select the few following lines, with which the epistle concludes:

> " Hæc tibi dictaram morbis oppressus acerbis,
> Corpore quos fragili patior tristique senecta;
> Nam dum præcipiti labuntur tempora cursu,
> Nunc ad Olympiadis ter senæ venimus annos.
> Omnia prætereunt, fugit irreparabile tempus,
> Vive, vale lætus tristique memento senectæ."

The mental vigour and classic recollections which the entire epistle displays, have indeed justly obtained admiration. But, if we descend to a minute examination, we shall be still more surprised, at the exquisite delicacy of taste, and the singular propriety of language, for which the poem is remarkable. The familiar acquaintance of Columbanus with the metrical rules of composition, even the few verses that have been adduced sufficiently evince. In these we can observe, how the Dactylic or Spondiac foot is introduced, according as the one or the other is suited to express the particular sentiments, which the writer would convey: while, in the lines, where this predominance of either foot would not be proper, Dactyls and Spondees are felicitously intermingled, and the cæsural syllables distributed with the nicest attention to poetic harmony. In the

letter which the Saint wrote to Hunaldus, we can perceive not less striking indications of the care, with which he had applied himself in his youth to the study of the Greek poets. The apostolick labours of Columbanus in England, in Gaul, in Italy, and in Germany, left him but little leisure, to cultivate classic literature, after he had retired from his native country. His proficiency in that department of learning must be then regarded, as a proof of the attention, which was paid in Ireland to the study of polite letters, in an age, when that study was neglected in many other parts of Europe.

In a few years after the death of St. Columbanus, the celebrated seminary of Lismore was commenced by St. Carthagus, the first Bishop of that diocess. Previously to the foundation of the school of Lismore, Carthagus had erected several monasteries, and had drawn up a rule for the regulation of their inmates.

It was not, however, till the time of St. Cataldus, who lived in the latter part of the seventh century, that the institution of Lismore acquired celebrity. Cataldus had studied at Lismore, and when he had completed his education, was advanced to a professorship in that establishment. The fame of the new professor attracted, from Britain and from various parts of the Continent, a numerous assemblage of students to Lismore. The kindness and hospitality with which the strangers were received by the Irish people, have been recorded by the venerable Bede in terms of merited commendation. This historian informs us, that while Finnian and Colman, two Irish Bishops, presided over the churches of Northumbria, many of the nobles and of the other natives of Britain repaired to Ireland, either to cultivate sacred literature, or to lead a life of greater perfection. Some of these, he continues, engaged in the monastick state,

while others of them resorted to the several schools of Ireland, and applied themselves to literary pursuits. All of them, he adds, were most cheerfully entertained by the Irish people, who not only supported them, but also educated and supplied them with books gratuitously.* Having passed some time in the education of youth at Lismore, Cataldus departed from Ireland, and was promoted first to the See of Rachaud, and afterwards to that of Tarentum.†

In the narrative, which describes the condition of literature in Ireland during the seventh century, the name of Bummain, a Monk of St. Columba's institute, deserves to be recorded with distinguished honour. The history of this celebrated man will show, with what great care, the study of astronomy was cultivated in Ireland.

* Bede, L. 3, C. 27.

† In his Life of St. Cataldus, Bon. Moroni thus describes the numbers, who resorted to hear the instructions of the Saint at Lismore:

" Undique conveniunt proceres, quos dulce trahebat
Discendi studium, major num cognita virtus,
An laudata foret. Celeres vastissima Rheni
Jam vada Teutonici, jam deseruere Sicambri:
Mittit ab extremo gelidos Aquilone Boemos
Albis, et Averni coeunt, Batavique frequentes,
Et quicunque colunt alto sub rupe Gebennas.
Non omnes prospectat Arar Rhodanique fluenta
Helvetios; multos desiderat ultima Thule.
Certatim hi properant diverso tramite ad urbem
Lesmoriam, invenis primos ubi transigit annos."

Lismore was founded about the year 633. It was ravaged by the Danes in 915, and burned by Turlogh O'Connor in 1121. In 1173 it was again pillaged by Raymond le Grose. Two churches were built at Lismore by Cormac Mac Carty, King of Desmond, in the interval between the burning of the town of Turlogh, and the plundering of it by Le Grose. The injury done by Turlogh was, it is probable, repaired before the year 1173. Among the other distinguished persons, who, in the seventh century received their education in Ireland, was Alfrid, King of Northumbria. William of Malmbury (De Gestis Regum, L. 1. C. 3.) It was in the early part of the same century, also, that the monastery of Malmbury was founded by a learned Irishman, called Maidulf, from whom Malmbury derives its name.

Even before the Gospel was announced in Ireland, astronomical learning appears to have been attended to, in that country. Nor will this appear surprising, if we call to mind the character of the peculiar superstition, which prevailed there. In the early part of the present history, it was shown, that the worship of fire, and in particular of the sun, was that, which the Irish people followed. In the ritual of this worship, it seems to have been an object of special solicitude, to define with accuracy the solstitial and equinoctial times, and the length of each recurring year, in order that the days, on which the annual festivals were to be solemnized, should be exactly determined.

After their conversion to Christianity, the superstition which had before urged the Irish people to the study of astronomy, ceased indeed to exert any influence upon them. But in the Christian dispensation, there were also festivals, which, in order to commemorate some of the principal mysteries of redemption, it was deemed right to celebrate, at certain seasons of the year. Of these festivals, Easter was the principal one. Among the earliest advocates for the adoption of the Roman rite regarding Easter, Cummian holds a distinguished place. The zeal, with which this learned Monk advocated the introduction of the Roman system, displeased and mortified his brethren at Hy, who clung with an unyielding tenacity to every usage, which their founder had sanctioned. Alarmed at the reproaches, which were, in consequence, unsparingly poured out against him, for his apostacy from a rite, which his master, St. Columba, had faithfully followed, Cummian found it necessary to vindicate the course which he had adopted; and, for this purpose, he composed the celebrated work, called his "Paschal Epistle." For an entire year, before he published his defence, he devoted his attention exclusively to the investiga-

tion of the subject in dispute. He searched the holy Scriptures, examined the records of Ecclesiastical history, and diligently studied the various cycles, and the several Paschal systems, which the Jews, the Greeks, the Latins, and the Egyptains, respectively followed. With a clear and steady eye, he investigated the minutest and most intricate difficulties of the Paschal computations, and pointed out with discriminating accuracy, the distinctive features of the cycle, which St. Patrick introduced into Ireland, of the cycle of Anatolius, and of that which was devised by Theophilus. Remarkable, however, as the epistle of Cummian is, for the evidence which it supplies, of that writer's proficiency in astronomical studies, it is not less so, for the proofs which it exhibits, of his knowledge of the Greek language, of the sacred Scriptures, of the works of the Fathers, and of church history.

The Apostolical labours of St. Virgilius in Germany have been already noticed. Arduous as these labours were, this distinguished man occasionally found leisure to turn his attention to literary pursuits. His proficiency in theological knowledge, he evinced in his controversy with St. Boniface, respecting the form of baptism. A subsequent controversy with the same Prelate proved, that in astronomical literature, he was also more skilled than his opponent. From the attention which he devoted to the study of astronomy, he was enabled to appreciate the superior merits of the theory, which maintains that the earth is a sphere, and he accordingly adopted the opinion, to which that theory conducted him. From the doctrine, that the earth is a sphere, Virgil was led by an easy and accurate course of reasoning, to deduce the existence of the Antipodes. The opinions of Virgilius alarmed the orthodoxy of Boniface, and he informed the Roman Pontiff of them. In the first part of his

reply to the letter of St. Boniface, Pope Zachary ordered that Prelate to convene a Synod, and inquire into the doctrines, which Virgil really defended. But in another part of the same epistle, the Pope expressed his determination to summon Virgilius to Rome, to account for his doctrine to the Apostolick See. No Council was, however, convened, and no condemnation was pronounced by any tribunal on Virgilius.

The subsequent history of Virgilius makes it probable, that the Pontiff and St. Boniface misconceived at first the opinion, which Virgil maintained, and that they abstained from passing any censure against him, as soon as they were accurately informed of the nature of his doctrine: for, in a short time after this controversy had terminated, Virgilius was promoted by Pope Stephen to the Bishoprick of Saltzburgh.*

The reader has already seen, with what ability, Dungal vindicated against Claudius the doctrine of the Catholic church, upon the respect due to sacred images, and to the relicks of the Saints. In the judgment of Muratori, the treatise which Dungal composed, on the occasion just now referred to, proves that he was a learned man, and that he was not only a proficient in sacred literature, but also a correct and elegant writer. Before he commenced his lectures at Pavia, Dungal had resided for some time in France. During his sojourn there, two solar eclipses occurred, and Dungal, at the desire of Charlemagne, composed a treatise

* The following lines occur in the encomium of Alcium on St. Virgilius (Poem No. 231):

"Egregius præsul meritis et moribus almus,
Protulit in lucem quem mater Hibernia primum
Instituit, docuit, nutrivit————
Sed Peregrina petens————
Vir pius et prudens, nulli pietate secundus."

St. Virgilius died on the 27th November, A. D. 785.

on the subject, which he addressed as an epistle to that Prince. The death of this learned writer is assigned to the year 834. His library, which contained a large and valuable collection of books, he bequeathed to the monastery which St. Columbanus had established at Bobbio.*

Among the eminent scholars of the ninth century, Sedulius, Abbot of Kildare, holds a distinguished place. Like the other illustrious writers, whose names have been already recited, Sedulius united to the study of the sacred writings a due attention to polite letters. Of his proficiency in both these departments of literature, the works that he composed are a sufficient proof.† If we believe Mabillon, the Sedulius who was born in the eighth century, of whom we now speak, was distinguished as a poet. In the opinion, however, of writers, whose judgment, in the present instance, is entitled to greater deference, the poet Sedulius belonged to an earlier period. In a manuscript, to which Mabillon himself refers, mention is made of a person named Sedulius, who taught philosophy in Italy, and afterwards poetry in Achaia. This Sedulius, the manuscript states, composed his treatise in the time of Theodosius the Younger, and of Valentinian the Third.‡

* Doctor Lanigan states, that the books, left by Dungal to the monastery of Bobbio, are now, in great part, in the Ambrosian library of Milan.

† The works ascribed to Sedulius, who belonged to the eighth and ninth centuries, are: "Commentaries on the Epistles of St. Paul and on the Gospel of St. Matthew;" two Grammatical works on "Priscian and Donatus," and a tract entitled, "Sedulii Commentariolus in artem Eutychii."

‡ Vet. Anal. Vol. 1, p. 363. The hymn which commences with the words, "A Solis ortus cardine," and that which begins thus: "Hostis Herodes impie," are ascribed to Sedulius. In his "Carmen Paschale," Sedulius thus beautifully expresses his own belief, and that of the Irish church, also, on the Eucharist:

> "Nec Dominum latuere doli, scelerisque futuri
> Prodidit auctorem, panem cui tradidit ipse,
> *Qui panis* tradendus erat; nam corporis atque
> Sanguinis ille sui post quam duo munera sanxit,

In a history of the transactions, which occurred in the reign of Charlemagne, an interesting account is given by the writer, a monk of St. Gall, in Switzerland, of Clemens and Albinus, two learned Irishmen, who, in the eighth century, settled in France. "When," says the writer just referred to, "the illustrious Charles began to reign alone in the western parts of the world, and literature was almost every where forgotten, it happened, that two Scots of Ireland, men incomparably skilled in human learning and in the holy Scriptures, came over with some British merchants to the shores of France." At the request of Charlemagne, Clemens commenced to instruct a number of the French youth, whom the King consigned to his care; and at his desire also, Albinus obtained the monastery of St. Augustin near Pavia, that he might discharge there the same office, which Clemens fulfilled in France.

It was during the period, when these distinguished men were imparting to the youth of France and Italy the intellectual riches, which they had acquired in their native land, that the Danes first began to infest the coast of Scotland and Ireland. For almost two centuries, after these barbarians commenced their predatory incursions in Ireland, that country was the theatre of unceasing struggles, between the invaders and the natives. Nor was the warfare of the Danes attended with the usual calamities only, which follow in the train of a hostile army. Their mode of warfare was of the most desolating and destructive charac-

Atque cibum potumque dedit, quo perpete nunquam
Esuriant sitiantque animæ sine labe fideles."

* * * * * *

"Corpus, sanguis, aqua, tria vitæ munera nostræ
Fonte renascentes, *membris et sanguine* Christi
Vescimur, atque ideo templum Deitatis habemur;
Quod servare Deus nos annuat immaculatum,
Et faciat tenues *tanto manere* capaces."

ter, and directed its greatest fury against the religious and literary institutions of the kingdom. When the Northmen first came to Ireland, the acquisition of plunder being the principal object, which they had in view, their attention was soon turned to the riches, which the piety of Irish Christianity had employed in adorning churches, or in providing for the support of those, who devoted themselves to a religious life. Wherever these barbarians came, they pillaged the churches and the monasteries; and not satisfied with the spoil, with which they were thus enriched, they explored and rifled the shrines, where the relicks of the Saints were deposited. On many occasions, after they had been satiated with plunder, they set fire to the sacred edifice; and it not unfrequently happened, that numbers of the Clergy, of the Monks, and of the people, perished in the flames. As soon as they retired from the vicinity of the place, where they carried on the work of devastation, the Clergy and the people united together, to repair the injury, which these freebooters had inflicted. But it often happened, that the efforts to build up what had been destroyed were scarcely terminated, when the Danes returned again, and committed the same atrocities, which they had perpetrated before. Occasionally, indeed, these daring banditti were encountered by the native Princes, and received the punishment due to their crimes. But, the opposition they met with was, for the most part, of a partial and transitory description, and such as, perhaps, was more calculated to incite them to revenge, than to deter them from a reiteration of their atrocities.

Unfortunately for Ireland, at the very time, when the Danes infested the country, her Princes and people were divided among themselves, and they expended in petty and unmeaning strifes, the energy which would have trium-

phantly freed their country from this sanguinary enemy. The Danes, profiting of the dissensions of the natives, supported the pretensions sometimes of one party, and sometimes of another, and thus at length succeeded in acquiring a permanent settlement in the country. Even in the celebrated battle of Clontarf, which shook the Danish power in Ireland to its very foundation, Brian Boroimhe, the Monarch of Ireland, had to contend not only against a countless multitude of the Northmen, but even against a formidable army of his countrymen, who fought under the command of their own Princes. The power of the Danes was indeed broken in this engagement: for, besides the loss of many of their leaders, 13,000 of their soldiers perished on the field. Yet, those of them that remained, were still strong enough, to exact a dreadful retribution from the natives: and with an untiring perseverance, they availed themselves of the different opportunities, which afterwards occurred, to re-enact the same scenes of horror, in which they had before indulged. But, by degrees, some of them were gained over to the Christian religion, and were gradually taught to listen to the dictates of humanity. Their depredations, however, were occasionally repeated, at least, in some parts of the country, until about the period, when the English arrived in Ireland.

It was impossible, that an enemy, such as the Danes were, should have, for so long a time, infested the kingdom, and not inflict a most serious injury on the interests of literature. In the history of almost any other country, an instance can, perhaps, scarce be found, of an enemy, who for two successive centuries, carried on with such little interruption, a warfare so destructive, as that of the Danes was, to the civil, religious, and literary prosperity of a nation. The records of their atrocities still remain; and, it

may be said with truth, that if their authority were not unquestioned, we could scarcely, at the present day, give credence to the appalling narrative, which they contain.*

But notwithstanding the interruptions, which the incursions of the Danes gave to the cultivation of letters in Ireland, we meet in history the names of several Irishmen, who during the ninth century attained in foreign countries a high reputation for learning. The first of those whom I shall notice is Helias. Helias owed to the instructions of Theodulf, Bishop of Orleans, the exalted character and station, which he attained in France. After having completed his studies under that Prelate, Helias entered on the office of teaching. His success in this department has been recorded in the most honourable terms. In the history of the Bishops of Angouleme, he is said to have conducted, " in the most

* The Danes first landed in Ireland in the year 795, and plundered the island of Rechran: in 798, they plundered Holmpatrick. In 802, they burned the monastery of Hy, and several of the Monks perished in the flames. In 806 they visited Hy again, and again set fire to its monastery. In 807, they penetrated into Ireland, as far as Roscommon, destroyed that place, and laid waste the adjoining country. In 812, they were attacked by the natives, and great numbers of them slain. In 815, the Norwegian Prince, Turgesius, invaded Ireland. In 821, the Danes plundered Cork, Lismore, and the monastery of Inisdamle. In 823, they pillaged the monastery of Bangor, and the rich shrine of St. Comgall, which was preserved there; they also killed the Abbot and many of the Monks: they had visited Bangor before in 812; and either on this occasion, or in the attack of 823, massacred 900 Monks. In 824, they visited Hy a third time, and murdered St. Blaithmac, while he was celebrating Mass. In 824, they pillaged Inisdamle again, and destroyed the monastery of Lusk. In 831, they entered Armagh, and plundered it three times in one month: In 831, they pillaged the church of Dubleek, the monastery of Monaghan, and the towns of Connor and Louth: In 834, Glendaloch and Slane; and in 835, they burned Ferns, the monastery of Clonmore, and several churches in Munster. In 835, Turgesius laid waste Connaught and a great part of Leinster: and in this and in the three following years, he destroyed several churches. In 836, the Danes plundered Kildare, and set fire to the church. In 837, two Danish fleets arrived, one in the Boyne, and the other in the Liffey: the Danes, whom they conveyed, spread themselves over the plains, through which these rivers flow, and plundered churches, monasteries, &c. &c. In 839, they burned Cork, Ferns, Clonfert, murdered many of the religious, and destroyed the church of Slane. In 840, they plundered Louth, and carried into captivity several Bishops and other dis-

admirable manner," the literary institutions, which were placed under his care; and in the history of Christian France, the epithet of "most learned" is bestowed upon him. Among the pupils, who attended the lectures of Helias, was Erric of Auxerre. In his preface to the Acts of St. Germanus, addressed to Charles the Bald, Erric bears testimony to the services, which, even in his own time, were rendered to literature in France, by the numerous Irishmen who resorted to that country. "What need is there," says he, in the work just referred to, "to make mention of Ireland, whose countless multitudes of learned men, setting at nought the dangers of the sea, migrate to our shores?" Nor were the merits of Helias unappreciated, or left without an honourable requital. In a short time, he was promoted to the See of Angouleme; and we find his name mentioned

tinguished persons: some of these they put to death. In the same year they set fire to Armagh, and burned its cathedral and other religious edifices. In 842, they plundered the monasteries of Clonmacnois, Birr, Saigir, and also the church of Ferns. In 844, they burned Clonmacnois and Lorragh, and pillaged the monastery of Tirdaglass. About this time, also, they pillaged the monasteries of Taghmon, Timolin, and the monastery of the English, in Maye: wherever they came, they carried away the sacred vessels, destroyed or injured the libraries, and put to death, or took captive, many of the people, of the monks, and of the Clergy. In consequence of these calamities, many of the Bishops and of the Clergy were compelled to seek an asylum in other countries. In 848, Olochobair, Bishop of Emly, and King of Munster, defeated the Danes in three engagements, and killed a great number of them. In 848, the Danes again got possession of Armagh, and expelled from it the Primate, together with the religious and the students. In 848, the Danes were defeated by Melseachlin, and Turgesius drowned by his order in Loch-vair. In 849, a powerful Danish fleet arrived; Melseachlin entered into a treaty with the Chiefs, and employed the Danish forces against some of the Irish Princes, with whom he was engaged in war. About this time, the Danes of Dublin, who were called Fingals, were attacked by another Danish tribe, called Dubhgals, and many of the former were slain. In 852, the Danes entered Armagh, and laid it waste on Easter Sunday. In 853, three Danish Chiefs, who were brothers, Amlave, Sitric, and Ivar, arrived in Ireland: Amlave got possession of Dublin; Ivar of Limerick: Sitric settled at Waterford, and built that city. In 856, they were attacked by Melseachlin, King of Ireland: many of them were killed; but great numbers also of the Irish perished. In 857, Cathan Fionn, with the Irish and Danes of his party, was defeated by Ivar and Amlave: in 859, Ivar and Amlave ra-

among the Bishops who assisted at the councils of Pistes and Soissons.

But, it was not in France only, that the splendour of Irish genius shone forth during the ninth century. In Italy too, the memory of some illustrious Irishmen is still cherished, who, at that period, laboured there with success in the cause of religion and of learning. Among these, St. Donatus, an Irish Bishop, holds a distinguished place. This holy man, after having been advanced to the episcopal dignity in his own country, undertook a pilgrimage to Rome. There, he was favourably received by the holy Father, who dismissed him with his benediction. Departing from Rome, Donatus visited Fiesole, and was received with distinguished kindness, by the Clergy and the people of that important city. The See happening to be then vacant, they earnestly requested the

vaged the territory of Meath. In 860, Melsecachlin defeated the Danes of Dublin: in this year, also, a party of Danes, under the command of Aidus, the son of the late King of Ireland, devastated Meath: by the help of Amlave, Aidus was afterwards raised to the throne of Ireland. In 866, Aidus, however, fought against them, and killed 240 of the Danish leaders. In 869, Amlave plundered Armagh, burned the town and the religious institutions, and killed or took captive about 1000 persons. In 871, Amlave returned to Ireland, from which he had a short time before departed, with a fleet of 200 ships. In 873, the Danes of Dublin ravaged Munster: in 884, they again pillaged Kildare, and carried off the Prior, with 280 persons. In 886, they killed in battle several of the Irish Princes and of the natives. In 887, they plundered Ardbraccan; in 888, Kildare; in 889, Clonard; in 891, or 895, Armagh, from which they carried away 710 captives. In 896, the Danes of Tyrconnell were defeated by Aiteid and two of their Chiefs killed. In 914, a party of Danes was defeated at Waterford with great loss on their side. In 915, the Danes plundered Cork, Lismore, and Aghaloe. In 919, Niell, King of Ireland, and many of the Irish Princes were killed in a battle with the Danes, near Dublin. In 920, the Danes suffered considerable loss in an engagement with Donough, King of Ireland. In 950, Congal, King of Ireland, was killed in a battle with the Danes of Dublin. In 950, the Danes of Dublin plundered Slane, set fire to the church, and many of the people perished in the flames. In 950, Godfrid, a Danish Chief, was defeated by Roderic, Prince of Lethcuinn, and lost 1000 of his men; Roderic, however, was also killed. In 950, a party of Danes ravaged Clonfert, and Godfrid plundered the southern parts of Munster. In 951, Godfrid took Dublin, plundered Kells, Domnach Patrick, Ardbraccan, Tullen, Killakire, and

Saint to become their Pastor. The earnestness with which they urged their entreaty succeeded at length, in overcoming his reluctance, and he assumed the government of that diocess. In addition to the duties of his pastoral office, Donatus found leisure to attend to literary pursuits, and devoted much of his time to instructing the youth of Tuscany in sacred and profane letters.* Of the several works composed by him, some of his poetical compositions alone have been transmitted to our times. In one of these, he thus beautifully enumerates the blessings, which Providence had bountifully conferred upon his native land:

"Finibus occiduis describitur optima tellus
Nomine et antiquis Scotia dicta libris,
Insula dives opum, gemmarum, vestis, et auri;
Commoda corporibus, aere, sole, solo.

some other religious places in Meath: Godfrid, with 500 of his followers, was soon after killed in Munster: In 952, the Danes pillaged Clonmacnois and Inisdamle: in 989, the Danes of Dublin were defeated by Melseachlin. In 997, Melseachlin and Brian Boroimhe compelled the Danes who had settled in several parts of Ireland to give them hostages. In the same year these Princes attacked the Danes of Dublin, and routed them with great slaughter. In 1013, another Danish fleet arrived and burned Cork. In 1014, the Danes and Lagenians united against Brian Boroimhe, and were defeated by that Prince at the battle of Clontarf. In 1015, the Danes made again predatory incursions in Kildare, Glendaloch, Clonard, Swords, and Armagh. In the same year, the Danes of Dublin were attacked by Melseachlin, and many of them put to death. In 1018, Bran, King of Leinster, had his eyes put out by order of Sitric, the Danish Sovereign. In 1021, or 1022, the Danes lost a great number of their men in a battle, which they fought at Delgany with Augustus, King of Leinster: they plundered Kells in 1018, and Duleek in 1023, and in 1037. In 1031, they pillaged Ardbraccan, and carried away much spoil and many captives. In 1081, the Danes (probably those of Limerick) plundered the island of Arran of the Saints, in which the ancient and celebrated institution of St. Enda was situated. In 1089, a party of Danes destroyed the monastery of Inisbofinde in Loughree. In 1174, the Danes of Waterford rose up against the Anglo-Normans, and put to death all of them whom they happened to meet.

* Gratuita discipulis dictabam scripta libellis
Schemata metrorum, dicta beata senum.

These lines, composed by St. Donatus, were engraved on his monument in the Cathedral of Fiesole.

Mclle fluit pulchris et lacteis Scotia campis
Vestibus atque armis, frugibus, arte, viris.
Ursorum rabies nulla est ibi; sæva leonum
Semina nec unquam Scotica terra tulit.
Nulla venena nocent, nec serpens serpit in herba*
Nec conquesta canit garrula rana lacu.
In qua Scotorum gentes habitare merentur,
Inclyta gens hominum milite, pace, fide."

Among the numerous Irishmen, who, in the ninth century, cultivated classical literature with success, John Scotus Erigena holds a distinguished place. Scotus was born in the beginning of the ninth century, and received his education in Ireland. About the middle of the same century, he passed over into France, where in consequence of the great reputation, which he had acquired for learning and eloquence, he was kindly received by Charles the Bald, and honoured every day with a place at the royal table. At the request of the King, he undertook to translate into Latin from the original Greek, the works of Dionysius the Areopagite.† In a letter to Charles the Bald, Anastasius, speaking of this translation, complains, indeed, that it was rendered obscure by its too great accuracy; but he also remarks, "that it was wonderful, how a man, who, placed at the extremity of the world, might be supposed to be unacquainted with other languages, in proportion as he was remote from the rest of mankind, was, notwithstanding, able to comprehend such deep things and render then in another tongue."

* St. Donatus here enumerates the freedom of Ireland from serpents, among the natural blessings, with which Providence favoured that country.

† Even so recently as the time of Usher, there was a church at Trim, called the Greek church. We may hence infer, that there was formerly Greek ecclesiasticks in Ireland, and to the opportunity which their residence here afforded, we may, perhaps, ascribe the proficiency of so many Irishmen in the Greek language. In the sixth volume of the "Histoire Literaire," mention is made of Irish Clergymen, who were associated with some Greek Ecclesiasticks, in the diocess of Toul, and who performed with them the church service in the Greek language, and according to the Greek rite.

It would have been fortunate for the fame of Scotus, if he had devoted himself exclusively to classical pursuits. He had been occupied in these studies from his early youth, and he had attained a proficiency in them, which entitled him to a high literary reputation. But, impelled by a rash ambition, to distinguish himself also in theological learning, which he had never studied, as he was not connected with the ecclesiastical state of life, he became bewildered in this (to him) new and unknown region, and displayed an extravagant incoherency, which cannot be accounted for, except by supposing, that the wonders of this strange land dazzled his intellectual vision, and distorted for him truths, that are obvious to the least gifted believer in revelation.

It was not in Ireland only, that the hostile incursions of the Danes injured the interests of religion and of learning. In England too, these barbarians carried on the same desolating warfare, which they had waged for almost two centuries in Ireland. Indeed, so far as relates to literature, England suffered incomparably more than Ireland, from the atrocities which they committed. From the death of Alfred to the time of St. Dunstan, learning had so declined in England, that, Mabillon asserts, on the authority of Spelman, that an English Priest could not at length be found, who was capable of either writing or translating a Latin letter.

Fortunately for the restoration of literature in England, several learned Irishmen had, in the early part of the tenth century, taken up their abode at Glastonbury. "Numbers of these illustrious men, who," says an English writer,* "were eminently skilled in sacred and profane learning, came into England, and chose Glastonbury for their place of abode." Among the noble youth, who were educated at Glastonbury, under their care, was St. Dunstan. From the

* Osbern. Vit. S. Dunst.

account, that has been given of the literary attainments, which Dunstan acquired at Glastonbury, we may form a correct estimate of the learning of his teachers, and of the system of education which they adopted. "To the familiar use of the Latin tongue, Dunstan joined a competent knowledge of philosophy: the holy Scriptures and the works of the ancient Fathers, were the subjects of his assiduous meditation: and his proficiency in the various arts of music,* painting, engraving, and working in the metals, as it was more easily appreciated, was universally and deservedly applauded."†

While the Monks of Glastonbury were endeavouring to revive in England the sacred flame, which the Danes had almost extinguished, Duncan, an Irish Bishop, attracted numbers of the youth of France to his lectures at Rheims. For the use of the students, who were under his care, he composed a Commentary on the nine books of Capella on the liberal arts. Besides the work now mentioned, Duncan wrote, also, observations on the first book of Pomponius Mela, on the situation of the earth.

In the eleventh century, as well as in the preceding ages, the schools of Ireland were resorted to by the youth of foreign countries. It was in that century, that Sulgenus, the learned Bishop of St. David's, visited our shores. For ten, or, if we believe some writers, for thirteen years, he remained in Ireland, in order to perfect himself in the know-

* Of the ancient use of music in the service of the Irish church, the Antiphonarium Benchorense supplies satisfactory evidence. Giraldus states, that it was customary even with the Bishops and other holy personages in Ireland to carry harps, and that they took great delight in playing sacred melodies. The same writer commends in the highest terms the skill of the Irish people in music: "Episcopi et abbates et sancti in Hibernia viri citharas circumferre, et in eis modulando pie delectari consueverint." * * * "In musicis instrumentis, præ omni natione quam vidimus, incomparabiliter est instructa (gens Hibernica.")

† Lingard Anglo-Saxon church.

ledge of the sacred Scriptures. At the end of that term, he returned home, and devoted himself to the instruction of his countrymen in the attainments, which he had acquired in the seminaries of Ireland. An account of his visit to Ireland has been given by a member of his own family, who had heard from Sulgenus, the information, which he has transmitted to us.*

The narrative of the destruction of Armagh by fire, in the year 1092,† shows, that the seminary of that place continued to be still frequented by the English students. In the account of the conflagration, it is stated, that a part of the Trien-Saxon, the name of the division where the English resided, perished in the flames. The school of Armagh held the first place among the seminaries of Ireland. Its foundation is attributed to St. Patrick himself; and the

* From that account, the following lines are taken. They are quoted by Usher, (Praef. ad Ep. Hib. Syll.)

"Exemplo patrum, commotus amore legendi,
Ivit ad Hibernos sophia mirabile claros.
Sed cumiam cimba voluisset adire revectus,
Famosam gentem Scripturis atque magistris,
Appulit ad patriam, ventorum flatibus actus,
Nomine quam noto perhibent Albania longe.
Ac remoratus ibi certe tunc quinque per annos
Indefessus agit votum, &c.
His ita digestis Scotorum visitat arva,
Ac mox Scripturas multo meditamine sacras,
Legis divinæ scrutatur sæpe retractans.
Ac ibi per denos tricens jam placidus annos
Congregat immensam pretioso pondere massam,
Protinus arguta thesaurum mente recondens.
Post hæc ad patriam remeans jam dogmate clarus
Venit, et inventum multis jam dividit aurum."

† In the preceding century, also, several buildings in Armagh were destroyed by lightning. Among them some named Fiadh Nemeadh, are mentioned. These, from the signification of their name, viz. "Celestial testimonies, or indications," were, it is conjectured, used for astronomical purposes. In speaking of the learned Irishmen of the eleventh century, I ought not omit the name of Marianus, who founded at Ratisbon the monastery of St. Peter. Besides transcribing several works, Marianus drew up Commentaries on the Psalms. His Commentaries consist of extracts from the works of the holy Fathers.

veneration in which the name of that Saint was every where held, attracted to that institution, in every succeeding age, multitudes of the youth of Ireland, and of foreign countries. According to the English annals, quoted by Magnesius, 1000 students resided at Armagh, and profited of the advantages, which its seminary afforded. The Irish Bishops were particularly careful, that the study of theology should be cultivated there with the greatest attention. In a Synod, which was convened at Clane in the course of the twelfth century, by the Primate Gelasius, it was unanimously ordained, that no one should be admitted a professor of theology in any church in Ireland, unless he had previously studied at Armagh.* At this Synod, twenty-six Bishops, and many Abbots and other Clergymen assisted. In a short time after the celebration of the Council of Clane, Roderic O'Connor, King of Ireland, enlarged the stipend of the chief professor of Armagh by the yearly donation of ten oxen. This donation, he bound himself and his successors to continue, as long as the public school should be kept open for all students, who should come to Armagh, as well from every part of Ireland as from Scotland.†

* Life of Gelas. Cap. 23. Four Masters, ap. Tr. Th. p. 309. The Synod was held A. D. 1162.

† Ware's Antiquities, p. 241. The death of Tighernach, the celebrated Irish annalist, occurred about the close of the eleventh century. The pages of this writer, (he was Abbot of Clonmacnois and Killcoman) "are frequently illustrated by quotations from Latin and Greek authors: as V. G., Horace, Virgil, Pliny the Younger, Eusebius, Origen, Saint Jerome, Julius Africanus, Anatolius, Bede, &c., whom he not only quotes with accuracy, but frequently balances and contrasts their authority with much critical acumen."—D'Alton's essays on Irish History. On the works of the several Irish annalists, whose authority has been occasionally referred to in the present history, D'Alton remarks, "that there is found in them such an agreement in essential, and such a difference in unimportant matters, as bespeak that veracity without combination, which has been deduced as the best evidence of authenticity in a more vital cause." In the eleventh century, also, the Saintly and learned Chronographer, Marianus Scotus, died. He continued his chronicle to the year 1083: and his work is not sur-

The history of many of the eminent ecclesiasticks, who presided over the Irish church in the twelfth century, has been already laid before the reader. Their history demonstrates, that Ireland then continued to maintain the same character for piety and learning, for which she was previously distinguished.

For the services rendered by Irishmen to literature in the twelfth century, we may refer even to the Pontiff, through whose interposition, Ireland lost her independence. About the period, when Adrian the Fourth ascended the Papal throne, an Irishman, by name Gregory, who had been just elected Abbot of the Irish monastery of Nuremberg, went to Rome, to receive investiture from the Roman Pontiff. Of the several persons concerning whom the Pope wished to be informed by Gregory, there was none about whom he appeared more kindly solicitous than Marianus, an Irishman, who had been formerly his preceptor. Marianus, at this time, a Monk in the monastery at Ratisbon, had taught the liberal arts at Paris, and while there, he numbered among his pupils Nicholas Brecspere, who, under the name of Adrian, now held the Chief Pastoral dignity in the Catholic church. The reply of Gregory, that Marianus was still in health, afforded great pleasure to the holy Father, and he willingly profited of the occasion, to speak of his former Professor, in the highest terms of commendation.

From the evidence, which I have adduced, an impartial person can, without difficulty, form a correct judgment of the state of religion and of literature in Ireland, at every

passed by any similar production of the middle ages. He has left Notes on all the Epistles of St. Paul annexed to a copy of the Epistles, which was transcribed by himself. This work is still extant in the Imperial library of Vienna.—Lanig. Vol. 4, p. 7.

period since the conversion of that country until the English invasion. It would be easy to enlarge upon that evidence, and to confirm it by the testimony of some of the most illustrious writers in modern times. But enough has been advanced to prove, "that Ireland, for ages after the coming of St. Patrick, abounded with most learned persons; and on account of the multitude of most holy men, as well those resident therein, as those who departed to foreign countries to gain souls to Christ, was justly called the Island of Saints."*

* Ware, Irish Writers.



APPENDIX.

AN ABSTRACT OF THE CONTROVERSY BETWEEN THE METROPOLITANS OF DUBLIN AND ARMAGH, CONCERNING THEIR RESPECTIVE CLAIMS TO THE PRIMACY.

From Harris' edition of Ware's Bishops of Ireland, p. 72.

"I shall here take occasion to give the reader, in one view, a full idea of this controversy, in its rise, progress, and final period; which will give light to many passages, now dispersed in several records and histories, and which are often barely hinted at by Sir James Ware.

The submission of the Munster Bishops to St. Patrick in point of Primacy, may be seen in the accounts of his life.* History, indeed, is silent as to the conduct of those of Leinster and Connaught upon the occasion. Yet it is no way improbable, that, as they were indebted for their establishment to his labours, so they returned him that reverence and submission, which were due to his superior virtue. His contemporary and disciple, Fiech,† Bishop of Sletty, gives the preference to Armagh, before all other Bishopricks in the kingdom, and call it, by way of eminence, the See of the kingdom. St. Evin,‡ a writer of the sixth, or at latest, the beginning of the seventh century, gives Armagh the name of the fixed Metropolis of

* Sect. 34. † Vit. St. Pat. Stanz. 22 and 25. ‡ Vit. Trip. pt. 3, ch. 101.

Ireland, and allows it the supreme administration over all the other churches of the kingdom: and all the early writers agree in calling it the Metropolis, Primatial Church, and Mistress of all Ireland. St. Bernard,* in the twelfth century, entitles it, the first See; and adds, "that there was another Metproolitical See, *i. e.* Cashel, which Archbishop Celsus had then lately constituted, but subject to the first See, and to the Archbishop of it, *Tanquam Primati*, as to its Primate." And in reason it seems necessary, that there should be a Supreme in every country, for a last resort in all matters of controversy.

The humility and virtue of the early Prelates, and the regular lives both of the Clergy and laity, in the first ages of our reformation from Heathenism, afforded but little occasion for the exercise of this Primatial right. Naud, Archbishop of Armagh, in the year 810, is the first we read of, after St. Patrick, who made a regular Visitation in Connaught, and reformed some Ecclesiastical abuses. And a few years after, Atrigius visited both Munster and Connaught, and exercised his Primatial jurisdiction in both these Provinces. Dermod, Mælisa, Donald, all Archbishops of Armagh, in their respective ages continued this practice. Archbishop Celsus, in 1106, visited Munster, and in 1111 presided at the Synod of Usneach, convened by his authority, at which fifty Bishops and three hundred Priests assisted; where rules and canons were established for the regulation of the lives, both of Clergy and laity. In 1116 he visited Connaught a second time. In 1126, he continued a year out of his diocess, and reduced the Clergy and people to a better discipline. The several Visitations and Synods held by Gelasius, Archbishop of Armagh, through all the Provinces of Ireland, may be, in part, seen in his life; one of which he held at Clane, in the diocess of Kildare, and Province of Dublin, in 1162, ten years after the introduction of the Pall. Thus this subjection continued without rub or interruption, for between seven and eight hundred years, and without any attempt made from any other part of the kingdom to shake it off.

* Vit. Malach. ch. 9, 11.

The introduction of the Palls in 1152, was rather a matter of pride and ostentation,* than of any real use, and seems to have inspired the other Archbishops with the thoughts of contending with Armagh, founded upon a supposition, that all the Archbishops were constituted upon an equal foot of jurisdiction, since there was no difference made in the distribution of the Palls. It is probable, that the bearing of the Cross erect, and other attendant ceremonies, were introduced with the Pall, or much about the same time: at least I have met with no account of it before in our Irish history.

The first pretence for opening a breach between Armagh and Dublin, was occasioned by a Bull procured by John Comyn, the first English Archbishop of Dublin, from Pope Lucius the III.,† dated the thirteenth of April, 1182, whereby the Pope decreed, "that, following the authority of the holy Canons, no Archbishop or Bi-

* By referring to the account which is contained in the fourth chapter of the present history, of the origin and use of the Pallium, the reader will perceive how groundless this observation of Harris is.

† In the opinion of Doctor Lanigan, Harris was mistaken, in ascribing the origin of the controversy between the Archbishop of Armagh and Dublin to the Bull of Lucius the III. In vol. 4, p. 260, Doctor Lanigan makes the following observations. "Harris gives (*Archbishops of Armagh, at Walter de Jorse*) a good summary of this tedious controversy, which he took in great part from Mac-Mahon's *Jus Primat Armac.*, a learned and respectable work. He deduces the origin of it from the bull of Lucius III.; but I think he was mistaken, as he certainly was with regard to the meaning of said bull. Nor do I find, that any Archbishop of Armagh, contemporary with John Cumin, complained of this bull, although Peter Talbot, who is refuted by Harris, (*ib. at Moeliosa O'Carrol*) pretended that this Mocliosa had a contest with him on this subject. And in fact I do not perceive in this bull any thing derogatory to the real primacy of Armagh. I should rather derive the commencement of this dispute from some later bull, such as one of Honorius III., granted to Henry de Loundres, Archbishop of Dublin, and "prohibiting any Archbishop or other Prelate of Ireland (except the suffragans of Dublin and the Pope's Legate) from having the cross carried before them, holding assemblies, (except those of the religious orders) or treating of ecclesiastical causes (unless they be delegated by the Holy See) in the province of Dublin, without the consent of the Archbishop of Dublin." This bull goes much farther than that of Lucius III.; for in the first place the exemption is not confined to the diocess of Dublin, but extends to the whole province; and secondly, which is very material, the right of having the cross carried before him, which used to be exercised by the Primate in every part of Ireland, is prohibited as to the province of Dublin. This was a real infringement

shop, should, without the assent of the Archbishop of Dublin, (if in a Bishoprick within his Province,) presume to celebrate any Synod, or handle any causes or Ecclesiastical matters of the same diocess, unless enjoined thereto by the Roman Pontiff, or his Legate." This Bull was twice renewed in the year 1216, in favour of Archbishop Loundres, by the Popes Innocent the III. and Honorius the III., notwithstanding the opposition given to it by Eugene Mac-Gillivider, Archbishop of Armagh, whose death the same year put an end to any contest at that time.

It is hard to conceive what pretence of exemption the Archbishop of Cashel could set up, unless from the equality in the distribution of the palls before mentioned: for he had no Bulls in his favour; yet there is a copy of a Covenant still extant, and to be seen in the black book of the Archbishops of Dublin, whereby Archbishop Loundres covenants with Marian O'Brien, Archbishop of Cashel, to

of a privilege of the see of Armagh; yet there is nothing said in opposition to its right of receiving appeals from the province of Dublin. There was, however, enough in this bull to cause dissatisfaction at Armagh. What is said in it concerning the not allowing any prelate of another province to treat of ecclesiastical causes *in that of Dublin*, while it does not prevent the treating of *at Armagh* causes belonging to the province of Dublin, confirms what I have observed in the preceding note as to the place, in which, according to Lucius' bull, no prelate, different from the Archbishop of Dublin, is permitted to treat of the ecclesiastical affairs of the diocess of Dublin. Were the words of that bull to be understood otherwise than as I have explained them, they would imply a privilege vastly greater than that granted by the bull of Honorius. Now it is evident, that Honorius intended to confer greater exemptions than Lucius had, and yet he goes no farther than to prevent any prelate of a different province (alluding to the Archbishop of Armagh) from juridically treating of ecclesiastical causes *in the province of Dublin*. Hence it is clear, that the intention of Lucius was, that no prelate, different from the Archbishop of Dublin, should treat of the affairs of the diocess of Dublin *in the diocess of Dublin*, without his meaning that said Prelate might not treat of them elsewhere. Mac-Mahon is rather unfortunate (*Jus. &c.* § 75.) in his comments on the bull of Honorius, which he strives to make appear as spurious. He sneers at its being allowed to the suffragan Bishops of the province of Dublin to have the cross carried before them without the consent of the Archbishop. But the bull does not permit them to do so in the diocess of Dublin, but only in the province, that is, in their own diocess and no where else. As the bull refers to the whole province, it was necessary to insert that clause, whereas otherwise a Leinster suffragan Bishop, *ex. c.* a Bishop of Kildare, would be prohibited from having the cross carried before him in his own diocess without the consent of the Archbishop of Dublin."

oppose the Primate's claim with joint care and expenses; and being also the Pope's Legate, and a favourite of the Court of Rome, his interest prevailed so far, that in 1221, he obtained a Bull from Honorius the III., "prohibiting any Archbishop or other Prelate of Ireland (except the Suffragans of Dublin, or the Apostolick Legate,) without the assent of the Archbishop of Dublin, or his successors, to bear up the cross, celebrate Assemblies, or handle Ecclesiastical causes in the Province of Dublin, unless delegated thereto by the Apostolick See."

On the other hand, the Archbishop of Armagh supported his claim by immemorial custom, and a right derived down from St. Patrick; and also by Bulls obtained from Pope Celestin the III. and confirmed by his successor, Innocent the III. The contrariety of these grants occasioned a great controversy in the Court of Rome, between Reiner, Archbishop of Armagh, and Luke, Archbishop of Dublin, in the year 1250, which was held in suspense for many years between them and their successors, until at last, Pope Urban the IV. about the year 1261, confirmed the Order set down by Pope Celestin the III., and amply established the rights of the Primacy, in the person of Patrick O'Scanlain, Archbishop of Armagh. "By our Apostolick authority," says he, "after the example of Pope Celestin, our predecessor, we confirm to you and your successors, the Primacy of all Ireland, which you and your predecessors to this time are well known to have held firm and unshaken; and we decree, that all the Archbishops, Bishops, and other Prelates of Ireland, shall at all times pay reverence and obedience to you and to your successors, as to their Primates. We give license also to you and to your successors, to bear before you the Cross, which is the standard of Christ, throughout all the Provinces and Bishopricks subject to you by the Metropolitical and Primatial right, as it is well known, was granted to your predecessors."

During this controversy between Armagh and Dublin, Florence Mac-Flin, Archbishop of Tuam, set up his claim of exemption also in 1255. But he had neither prescription nor Bull in his favour,

and was soon overruled by Pope Alexander the IV., who decreed, "that the Archbishop of Armagh, and his successors, may, if they please, call themselves Primates of the Province of Tuam, and cause the Cross to be carried before them through all that Province, whenever they happened to pass through it; and may also visit the said Province, from five years to five years, and continue twenty-seven days only in their Visitations." From whence may be observed, that instead of a Septennial Visitation over Connaught, which the Archbishops of Armagh formerly exercised, it was now changed by this Bull, to a right every five years; but the days of visitation, which before were unlimited, were now confined to twenty-seven.

These privileges of the See of Armagh, thus renewed to Patrick O'Scanlain, were soon after published by him in a Provincial Synod, held at Drogheda; whereof in the Registry of Armagh, there is this entry: "Feria Secunda, &c. On Monday, the eighteenth of January, 1262, Friar Patrick O'Stannail (as he is there called) Archbishop of Armagh, and Primate of Ireland, celebrated a Synod at Drogheda, with the Suffragans of his Province, and some of the Suffragans of the Province of Tuam, subject to him by Primatial right; and some of the Cathedral Canons and Council of the Archbishop of Dublin, at which the Lord Justice, and some of the Peers of Ireland were present; and there the privileges of the church of Armagh, concerning the Primatial right, after their renovation in the Court of Rome, were published."

This solemn proceeding put a stop to the controversy, and it was not stirred again until a little before the year 1311, when John Lech, Archbishop of Dublin, depending on the King's power (for he was his favourite and almoner) then revived it; against whom our Prelate, Walter Jorse, petitioned the King, and had the usual relief; that is, a liberty to make Attorneys* to appear in Parliament for him. In a Parliament held at Kilkenny, before the Lord Justice Wogan, these Archbishops fell into arguments about their jurisdictions, and John Lech forbad our Primate, Walter Jorse, to

* Rym. 3, Tom p. 86. Wilk. Counc. 2, Tom. p. 301.

carry the Cross erect before him, within the Province of Dublin. I do not know what application the Primate made at that time for relief; but he surrendered the November following, not improbably from this cause, that he was overborne in his rights by the Archbishop of Dublin, supported by the King's power.

His brother, Roland Jorse, who succeeded him in the Archbishoprick, continued the contest; for it appears in the annals published by Camden, "that Archbishop Jorse arrived at Howth the day after the Annunciation, 1313. He arose in the night time, and by stealth erected his Cross, and carried it erect as far as the Priory of Grace-Dieu, within the Province of Dublin: that some of the family of the Archbishop of Dublin met him, and beating down his Cross, drove him in confusion out of Leinster." Roland surrendered as his brother did; and Archbishop Bicknor carried all before him for this time.

The same annals give an account, that, in the year 1337, St. John Charleton, Lord Justice, held a Parliament in Dublin, and David O'Hiraghty, Archbishop of Armagh, "being summoned, made preparation for his attendance in St. Mary's Abbey, near Dublin. But he was hindered from appearing, by Archbishop Bicknor and his Clergy, because he would carry his Cross erect before him; and they would not suffer it: although the King had issued several writs* to the Archbishop of Dublin, his Vicar General, and to the Mayors and Bailiffs of the city, prohibiting them from giving him any disturbance, which they disobeyed. Upon this David caused the aforesaid clauses of Pope Urban's Bull, which confirm the privileges of the See of Armagh, to be exemplified, under the great seal of Ireland, on the twenty-ninth of November, the same year." But I do not find that he made any further prosecution of his business.

In 1349, the contention broke out, more fiercely than ever, between Richard Fitz-Ralph, Archbishop of Armagh, and the said Alexander Bicknor. King Edward the III. wrote several letters that year to Archbishop Fitz-Ralph, "enabling him to carry the cross before him,

* Prin. Animad. p. 271, 410.

in any part of Ireland; and also to the Peers and great men, to be aiding and assisting to him in the prosecution of the rights of his church of Armagh, as to the Primacy. Fitz-Ralph confiding in his right and trusting to the power of God, and the aid of his Patron, St. Patrick, approached with the cross erect before him, even to Dublin, and through Dublin, lodged in the city, and continued in it three nights. He openly read and proclaimed the privileges of the church of Armagh, and the Bulls of his primacy, in the presence of the Lord Justice of Ireland, the Prior of Kilmainham, and such of the Peers, who were then in town; and fulminated the sentence of Excommunication against all who should oppose or resist him. But the Lord Justice, and Prior of Kilmainham, with their accomplices, having received money from the Archbishop of Dublin, put a stop to the affair of the church of Armagh. The Primate returned to Drogheda, and publicly denounced all of them excommunicated. But some of them acknowledging their error, went to Drogheda, and humbly on their knees obtained absolution from the Primate.

The same year, immediately after the retreat of the Primate from Dublin, the Prior of Kilmainham, who was the second in the conspiracy against the church of Armagh, fell sick to death, acknowledged his error, sent solemn messengers, and special proctors to Drogheda, and offered to oblige himself, and all his kindred, never to resist the See of Armagh for the future. Immediately after he had sent these messengers, he died, and was refused christian burial; until the Primate absolved him; there having appeared tokens of penitence in him. The same year also, Alexander Bicknor, Archbishop of Dublin, died."

John de St. Paul succeeded in the See of Dublin; and in 1350 procured a revocation of the Kings letters granted to the Primate, and a stay of execution of the Primacy, within the province of Dublin. The King in his letter of revocation suggested, that these letters granted to the Primate had been fallaciously obtained, by concealing the truth, to the great prejudice of the See of Dublin; and he commanded the Chancellor to issue writs as often as there

should be occasion; and to have public proclamation made; that no body under peril of life or limb should act to the contrary; and he commanded the Justices, Officers and Ministers, to arrest and imprison all offenders in the premises. Fitz-Ralph still insisted on the rights of his church; and the Archbishop of Dublin obtained other letters patent from the King, Dated 12th of May 1352, forbidding, more strictly than before, the execution of the Primate's power in the Province of Dublin.

A. D. 1353, the controversy was removed to Rome; where the matter (being discussed before Pope Innocent the VI.) received this decision by his Holiness, and the college of Cardinals; as Archbishop Allan in his register, reports, (viz.) "When I was in Rome (says he) soliciting the affairs of the Archbishop of Canterbury, in turning over many controversies then depending, I found in the Registry of Pope Innocent the VI., that the aforesaid suit was composed by the authority of the Pope, and the approbation of the Cardinals, under this form, (viz.) that both Armagh and Dublin should be Primates; but that for distinction sake, Armagh should entitle himself Primate of all Ireland; and Dublin should write himself Primate of Ireland, like Canterbury and York."

There have been some pains taken to blemish the credit of this entry by a late writer,* who insinuates, as if Allan had foisted it into his registry without authority, in support of his own cause. Be that as it will; it is certain it did not answer the end intended. For it appeareth in the registry of Armagh, that the remedy was so far from being complete, that the suit was yet depending in Rome, on the twentieth of January 1365, twelve years after the decision before mentioned: at which time the controversy grew so warm between Milo Sweetman, Archbishop of Armagh, and Thomas Minot, Archbishop of Dublin; that King Edward III. thought it necessary to interpose again, and required that the matter should be friendly compounded between them; and that according to the example of Canterbury and York, both should bear up their crosiers

* Mac-Mahon's Jus. Primat. § 76. & Sequ.

in each others Provinces, without any interruption; as is evident from many of the King's writs issued in this cause; and especially by his letters directed to the Archbishop of Armagh, dated the ninth of June, 1365. To which Milo answered thus: "that in obedience to the writ, I personally appeared two days, viz. 17th and 24th of September, to treat with the Archbishop of Dublin, on the confines of my Province; that the Archbishop of Dublin, although he had notice, did not appear; but on the last of the said days he sent his Proctor, who demanded, that I should obey every particular in the said writ: and especially what related to the mutual bearing up of the cross in each others Province; which (says he) I could not agree to, for the following reasons: first, through shortness of time, I could not have the advice of my Dean and Chapter. Secondly, that in token of my Primatial right, I had by Common Law, Pope's Bull's and King's concessions, the right of erecting my cross in the province of Dublin, and in all other Provinces of the Kingdom. Thirdly, that concerning the Primatial right, and carrying the cross in the Diocess of Dublin, there hath been a controversy depending for many years, and still remains undecided in the court of Rome; but no controversy concerning his carrying the cross in my Province. Fourthly, that every Archbishop of Armagh hath, or ought to have, by right, and ancient custom, three Archbishops in Ireland subject to him, viz., Dublin, Cashel, and Tuam: the latter of whom contended upon this matter, and my predecessor had a judicial sentence against him in the court of Rome; and obtained a Bull from the Apostolick See that he might, by Primatial right, visit the Province of Tuam every five years; (which I have in my custody:) and so concludes, praying the King's excuse for not obeying his writ in that particular; and desiring, that no such writ should for the future issue out of his Chancery." The King also sent a writ* to the Archbishop of Dublin about the same time, enjoining him to give a meeting to Armagh, and to treat amicably concerning their differences about carrying the cross; and to make such a final end, that the liberty of carrying the

* Rym. Tom. 6. p. 467. Wilk. 3. Tom. p. 61.

cross might be mutual in each others diocess ; taking example from the reformation made by the King between Canterbury and York ; and if any impediment should arise, then commanding him to appear before him in England at a future day, to give an account to him of the impediment, and to receive his and his councils orders therein. We see the Archbishop of Dublin's conduct upon this occasion before, in the answer of the Archbishop of Armagh.

This method then proving ineffectual, Lionel Duke of Clarence, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, on the third of October following, issued a writ to the Sheriff of Dublin, dated at Kilkenny, commanding him to warn the Archbishop of Dublin, to appear before him, at Castledermot, on the Tuesday after St. Luke's day, to answer for the aforesaid contempt, in not meeting and agreeing with the Archbishop of Armagh.

Whether the ambition of the Archbishops of Dublin flagged, or for what other cause I cannot tell ; but the contest seems to have been laid aside until the time of Richard Talbot, Archbishop of Dublin, who had been many times Lord Justice, and Lord Deputy. His contemporary, John Swain, Archbishop of Armagh, was, at five several Parliaments, held in the Province of Leinster, summoned to appear, viz. in 1429,* 1435, 1437, and 1438 ; and as often made returns to the writs of summons, that he could not personally attend without violation of his oath taken at his consecration, viz : To defend the rights of his See, and that he was hindered by the means of the contradiction and rebellion of the Archbishop and Clergy of Dublin, on the articles of bearing his cross, and his Primatial jurisdiction in the Province of Leinster. The same happened to his successor, John Prene, in 1442† and 1443, and four times to Archbishop Mey, viz. in 1446,‡ 1448, and 1449. It ought to be observed, that on the 15th of July, 1443, after the death of Primate Prene, the Dean and Chapter of Armagh elected Archbishop Talbot to the Primacy ; and in the preamble of their letters to Pope Eugene the IV. intimating the election ; they set forth the privileges of the See

* Segist. Swain. v. I. p. 292. 298. 629. 643. & 651. † Ibid. v. 2. p. 612. 665.
‡ Ibid. v. 2. p. 636. 648. 650. 655.

of Armagh, and its right of bearing the cross through all the Provinces of the Kingdom. But he rejected the election, and therefore hath left us room only to guess what his conduct would have been in case he had accepted of it.

Archbishop Talbot died in 1449. His next successors, viz. Michael Treoury, John Walton, Walter Fitz-Simons, William Rokeby, and Hugh Inge, being men of moderation, were contented with their peculiar rights; by which means the Archbishops of Armagh quietly enjoyed their Primacy over the other Provinces. In the records of Armagh may be seen the letters issued by Primate Bole, in 1461, for visitation of the Provinces of Cashel and Tuam; and the next year, a sentence given upon an appeal made from the Archbishop of Dublin, to the Primate's consistory, November fifth, 1462, in a matrimonial cause between Alson or Alice Knight, and her husband Simon Abrey, which is cited out of the register of Armagh by Dr. Dudley Loftus, in the cause of Ware and Shirley. So in 1493, in a cause between Nicholas Maguire, Bishop of Leighlin, and the chapter of that cathedral; the chapter appealed to the Metropolitan consistory of Dublin: but not meeting relief, they again appealed to the Primatial court of Drogheda, where Octavian, Archbishop of Armagh, hearing the proofs, inhibited the Bishop from attempting any thing to the prejudice of the daily distributions of the said cathedral, and cited the parties to his chancery near Drogheda. This account is given by T. Dowling in his annals.* Nor was there any difference of note after this, until 1533; where, in a parliament that year assembled, John Allan, Archbishop of Dublin, a prelate of an high and turbulent spirit, revived the old controversy concerning precedence, with Primate Cromer, who had been the year before constituted Lord Chancellor, which office Archbishop Allan had formerly exercised. The account Allan gives of it in his register is but short, and shows his temper, but not his success. "Tempore meo, &c." In my time (saith he,) a controversy arose between me and the Archbishop of Armagh, who was then the King's

* Ad. an. 1493.

Chancellor, concerning precedence." Doubtless he was defeated in his enterprize, or he would not have omitted to inform the world of the success.

The establishment of the reformation put an end to all controversies concerning bearing the cross. From that time it consisted in a contest for precedence in parliament, and other public assemblies. George Dowdal, Archbishop of Armagh, was a zealous enemy to the reformation, and with all his might opposed the introduction of the liturgy in the English tongue. On the contrary, George Brown, Archbishop of Dublin, favoured it with as much zeal and resolution; in reward of whose extraordinary merit, King Edward the VI. stripped Dowdal of the primacy of all Ireland; and by letters patent dated the 20th of October 1551, conferred the same on Archbishop Brown, and annexed it for ever to the see of Dublin. Queen Mary brought all back again into the old channel, obliged Brown to surrender his patent, and to deliver it cancelled in to the chancery, where a vacat remaineth on it on record. That Queen on the 12th of October 1553, in the first year of her reign, passed new letters patent under the great seal, whereby she re-established the title and office of the Primacy of all Ireland in the see of Armagh for ever, according to ancient usage. "We restore (says she, to Dowdal,) the primacy of all Ireland, which your predecessors beyond the memory of man, have been known to have held; and we confirm to you for ever the same; commanding that all other Archbishops and Bishops shall pay obedience to the primates, in the exercise of their Primatial office."

Under this authority, matters continued quiet for upwards of seventy years: Adam Loftus, while primate of Armagh, took place and signed before the Archbishop of Dublin; but when he was translated to Dublin, he gave precedence to Primate Lancaster, and signed after him: We hear of no dispute for precedence, until Lancelot Bulkeley was promoted to the See of Dublin. He revived the controversy with Primate Hampton, about the year 1623, upon this ground; that a Protestant King and council would confirm the patent granted by a Protestant King to his predecessor Brown, and

abolish that of a popish Queen to Primate Dowdal. The death of Primate Hampton soon after silenced the dispute at this time. But Archbishop Bulkeley again set it on foot against Primate Usher; upon which occasion, King Charles the First, on the 8th of July 1626, in the second year of his reign, directed letters to the Lord deputy Falkland, and the privy council, to examine into, and finally determine the difference; that the scandal, arising upon such an unseemly contention between prelates, might be avoided. But nothing was done in execution of this command, until June 1634, a little before the meeting of the parliament; when the Lord deputy Strafford, summoned the two Archbishops before the council board, and for two several days, examined narrowly into the differences; viewed the records; and heard all that could be alleged on either side, and then declared,* "That it appeared as well by the testimony of Bernard, in the life of Malachy, as by the old Roman provincials, and divers other evidences, that the See of Armagh had from all antiquity been acknowledged the prime See of the whole kingdom, and the Archbishop thereof reputed, not a Provincial Primate, (like the other three Metropolitans,) national, *i. e.* the sole Primate of Ireland, properly so called. That in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the Archbishop of Dublin (not being Chancellor,) both at the council board, and in the execution of the high commission, (even for such things as properly concerned the Diocess of Dublin itself) did constantly subscribe after the Archbishop of Armagh: that in the statute made for the erection of free schools in the 12th Elizabeth, the Archbishop of Armagh is nominated before the Archbishop of Dublin, as he was in that of the 27th of Queen Elizabeth; where all the Archbishops and Bishops were ranked in their order; as appeared by the parliament rolls: for which reason he decreed, that the Archbishop of Armagh, and his successors for ever, should have precedency, and be ranked before the Archbishop of Dublin, and his successors as well in Parliament and convocation house, as in all other meetings; and in all commissions where they should be mentioned; and in all places

* See this order among the MS. of Dudley Loftus in Marsh's Library.

as well within the diocess or province of Dublin, as elsewhere; until upon better proof on the part of the Archbishop of Dublin it should be adjudged otherwise." And thus was this dispute finally ended, which had from time to time perplexed and disturbed both church and state for many hundred years.

Before the passing of this act of council, Primate Usher was commanded to draw up a state of the controversy, and to deliver in writing what he knew on the subject. He unwillingly engaged in so invidious an argument, especially as it so nearly concerned himself. But on the repeated commands of his superiors, he wrote a short discourse upon the subject; which is deposited among the manuscripts of Trinity college, Dublin. This is the same piece which Dr. Wilkins* hath published in his councils, and therein brings down the argument to the time of granting the patent to archbishop Dowdal by Queen Mary, in 1553.

I should have observed, that after the reformation, the controversy concerning precedence was kept up between the titular clergy of the papal communion, and handed down among them, probably to this day. For we find that in June 1670, there was a meeting in Dublin, of all the Archbishops and Bishops of that communion, in order to subscribe a remonstrance of their loyalty, to be presented to the Lord Berkeley, Lord Lieutenant; when a dispute arose among them, whether Oliver Plunket, titular Primate of Armagh, or Peter Talbot, titular Archbishop of Dublin, should subscribe first. This contest gave rise to a pamphlet wrote by Plunket, called Jus Primatiale, or the ancient right and pre-eminence of the See of Armagh, above all other Archbishopricks of Ireland, printed in 1672, 8vo. Talbot answered this by a treatise, published at Lisle in 12mo. entitled, Primatis Dubliniensis, vel summa rationum quibus innititur Ecclesia Dubliniensis in possessione et prosecutione sui juris ad primatum Hiberniæ. The argument hath been since more copiously treated of by Hugh Mac-Mahon, titular primate of Armagh, who died 2d August 1737, with the title of Jus Primatiale Armachanum,

* Tom. 4, p. 80.

published in 1728, 4to., wherein the subject is learnedly and accurately handled, and, I may say, exhausted. From these several treatises I have for the most part drawn what I have offered upon the occasion of this controversy.

LETTER

FROM THE IRISH TO THE POPE, COMPLAINING OF THE INJUSTICE OF ADRIAN TOWARDS THEIR COUNTRY.

From Mac-Geogan's History.

Sanctissimo in Christo Patri Domino Johanni, Dei gratia, summo Pontifici, sui devoti filii, Donaldus Oneyl, Rex Ultoniæ, ac totius Hiberniæ hereditario jure verus heres, necnon & ejusdem terræ reguli & Magnates ac populus Hiberniacus, cum sui recommendatione humili, devota pedum oscula bonorum. (beatorum.) &c.

Ex mordaci & viperea Anglorum detractione, & iniqua minusque vera suggestione contra nos, nostri jurisque defensores,* vester, quod absit, animus aliquatenus concitetur, & res incognita atque ficta ipsum accendere debeat, ad vindictam aliquam tamquam veritate plena, de ortu nostro & statu, si tamen status dici debeat, ac etiam de injuriis crudelibus, nobis nostris que progenitoribus per nonnullos Reges Angliæ, eorumque Ministros iniquos, & Barones Anglicos in Hibernia natos, inhumaniter, illatis & continuatis adhuc, in insinuatione præsentium ingenti cum clamore scilicet vestris auribus intimamus, ut ex hoc valeatis descendere & videre, cujus partis clamorem veritas comitetur. Qua diligenter & sufficienter instructa, secundum quod rei poposcerit qualitas, judicii vestri districtio partis culpam feriat seu corrigat delinquentis. Noverit igitur sanctissima Paternitas vestra, quod, à tempore, quo antiqui patres nostri, scilicet tres filii Milesii, alias Micelii, Hispani, cum triginta navium classe à Cantabria, civitate Hispaniæ, in ripa Hiberi fluminis sita, unde de-

* Nostrique juris defensores.

nominationem accipimus quam habemus, in Iberniam, tunc omni carentem incola, divinitus devenerunt, tres mille quingenti & amplius fluxerant anni, & ex ipsis, sine admixtione sanguinis alieni, totius Hiberniæ ceperunt monarchiam Reges centum triginta sex usque Leogarium Regem, à quo ego Donaldus prædictus in linea recta carnalem traxi originem, & in cujus diebus sanctus Patricius, præcipuus Apostolus noster & Patronus, à Celestino, prædecessore vestro, Spiritu sancto inspirante, ad nos Dominicæ incarnationis CCCC.XXXV. anno patres nostros efficacissimè docuit catholicæ fidei veritatem. Et post prædicationem & fidei susceptionem, sub humili Romanæ Ecclesiæ obedientia, Reges de eodem sanguine, sine interpositione sanguinis alieni, in fide Christi excellenter edocti, ac caritatis operibus pleni, nullum in temporalibus recognoscentes superiorem, Reges sexaginta unus usque ad millesimum CLXX. annum Domini ibidem continuè regnaverunt. Et hi sunt non Anglici, nec alterius nationis aliqui, qui Ecclesiam Hiberniæ terris, largis possessionibus, ac pluribus libertatibus excellenter dotaverunt, licet modernis temporibus per Anglicos illis ut plurimum terris & libertatibus damnabiliter* sit pràvata. Et cum tanto tempore dicti Reges, contra diversarum regionum tirannos & Reges, concessam à Deo sibi, hereditatem propriis viribus strenuè defendissent, innatam libertatem semper tenentes illæsam, tandem Adrianus Papa, prædecessor vester, non tantum origine, quantum affectione & conditione, Anglicus, anno Domini, M.C.LXX. ad falsam, & plenam iniquitate, suggestionem Henrici Regis Angliæ sub quo, & fortassis per quem, sanctus Thomas† Cantuariæ eodem anno, pro justitia & defensione Ecclesiæ, mortem sustinuit, sicut scitis, dominium regni nostri, sub quadam certa verborum forma, eidem, quem potius, ob dictam culpam, proprio debuit privasse regno‡ de facto contulit indebite, ordine juris omisso omnino, Anglicana affectione, proh! dolor, excæcante tanti Pontificis tuitionem, sicque nos privans honore regio, nostri absque culpa & sine rationabili causa, crudelioribus omnium bestiarum dentibus tradidit lacerandos. Et qui ex nobis dolosarum vulpium & gulosorum

* Sunt. † Cantuariensis eodem modo, pro. ‡ De facto & contulit.

luporum excoriati dentes mortiferos infeliciter semivivi evaserant in dolorosæ servitutis violenter descenderunt abyssum. Ab illo enim tempore, quo Anglici, occasione collationis prædictæ, sub quadam exteriori sanctitatis ac religionis specie, regni nostri fines nequiter intrarunt, totis viribus omnique perfidia, qua poterant arte, nostram gentem delere penitus & extirpare radicitus sunt conati, & per turpis & fraudulentas astutias in tantum contra nos prævaluerunt, quod, ejectis nobis violenter, sine superioris autoritate, de spatiosis habitationibus nostris & hereditate paterna, montana, silvestria, ac paludosa loca & inutilia, etiam petrarum cavernas, pro salvanda vita nos petere, & longo tempore ad instar bestiarum in eisdem habitare, coëgerunt. Sed & in talibus locis nos incessanter inquietant, & quantum possunt, nituntur nos ejicere de eisdem, & omnem locum nostræ habitationis sibi indebitè usurpare, ex profundæ cæcitatis insania mendaciter asserentes, nullum locum habitationis liberum nobis in Hibernia deberi, sed sibi ipsis dicta terra totaliter* & tota de jure debetur. Unde, propter hæc & multa alia similia, inter nos & illos implacabiles inimicitæi & guerrae† perpetuo sunt exortæ. Ex quibus secutæ sunt occisiones mutuæ, deprædationes assiduæ, rapinæ continuæ, fraudes & perfidæ detestabiles & nimis crebræ. Sed, proh! dolor, ex defectu capitis omnis correctio nobis deficit & debita emenda. Ex hoc Clerus Hiberniacus & populus multis‡ ideo annis periclitabatur nimis graviter & horrende, non solum in rebus caducis & corporalibus, quinimo ex eodem defectu‖ maximum eis imminet periculum animarum, & hoc plus solito. Pro firma enim veritate tenemus, quod, occasione prædictæ suggestionis falsæ, & donationis inde secutæ plusquam quinquaginta millia hominum à tempore, quo facta est, usque in præsens, de utraque natione, præter consumptos fame,§ & afflictione & carcere, gladio ceciderunt. Hæc pauca de generali progenitorum nostrorum origine, & miserabili in quo Romanus Pontifex statu nos posuit, sufficiant isto vice. Sciatis Pater sanctissime, quod Henricus, Rex Angliæ, cui Hiberniam ingredi modo

* Et de jure debèri. † Perpetuæ. ‡ Jam *pro* ideo.
‖ Multum *pro* maximum. § Afflictos carcere.

quod prædicitur, fuit indultum, necnon & quatuor Reges successores ejusdem metas concessionis sibi factæ per Bullam Papalem, sub certis articulis ex ipsa Bullæ serie evidenter apparet, simpliciter sunt transgressi. Promisit enim dictus Henricus, prout in dicta Bulla continetur, quod Ecclesiæ Hibernicæ termina dilataret,* ejusdem jura illibata & integra conservaret, & populum legibus subderet ac bonis moribus informaret, virtutes infereret & plantaria vitiorum extirparet, & de singulis domibus unius denarii annuatim beato Petro Apostolo solveret pensionem. Hanc siquidem promissionem tam ipse quam prædicti sui successores, eorumque Ministri iniqui,† & subdoli Anglici, de Hibernia in nullo tenentes, & à concessionis forma penitus recedentes, studiose & ex intentione horum omnium præmissorum opposita opere compleverunt. Nam Ecclesiæ termini in tantum per ipsos sunt restricti, sincopati, & detruncati, quod nonnullæ Cathedrales Ecclesiæ medietate terrarum & possessionum suarum violenter sunt spoliatæ, omni fere Ecclesiastica libertate per eosdem omnino soluta. Per Ministros enim Regis Angliæ in Hibernia citantur, arestantur, capiuntur & incarcerantur indifferenter Episcopi & Prælati, & cum hujusmodi crebras & graves patiuntur injurias, tanto servili timore sunt oppressi, quod eas Sanctitati vestræ nullatenus audent intimare ; & quia ipsi improbe tacent & nos silere volumus in hac parte. Item populum Hibernicum, quem bonis moribus informare ac legibus subdere ex condicto promiserant, taliter informant, quod sancta & columbina ejus simplicitas, ex eorum cohabitatione & exemplo reprobo, in serpentinam calliditatem mirabiliter est mutata, legibus etiam scriptis, quibus, ut plurimum, prius regebatur, omnique alia, nisi à qua avelli non poterat, lege privarunt, pro gentis nostræ exterminatione leges pessimas statuentes, nimis reprobas & iniquas, quarum aliquæ, exempli causa, hic sunt insertæ. In Curia enim regis Anglæ in Hibernia istæ leges inviolabiliter observantur, viz. quod omni homini, non Hebernico, licet, super quacumque indifferenter actione, convenire Hibernicum quemcumque, sed Hibernicus quilibet, sive clericus sit sive laicus, solis Prælatis exceptis,

* Ejusque jura. † Subditi Angl.

ab omni repellitur actione eo ipso. Item, sicut plerumque accidere solet quando aliquis Anglicus perfidè & dolosè interficit hominem Hibernicum, quantumcumque nobilem & innocentem, sive clericum sive laïcum, sive regularem sive secularem, etiamsi Prælatus Hibernicus interfectus fuerit, nulla correctio vel emenda fit in dicta Curia de tali nefario occisore. Quinymmo quanto melior est occisus, & majorem inter suos obtinet locum ; tanto plus occidens honoratur, & præmiatur ab Anglicis, non solum popularibus, sed etiam religiosis & Episcopis Anglicis, & maxime ab illis, quibus incumbit ex officio de hujusmodi malefactoribus justam correctionem facere & debitam emendam. Item omnis mulier Hibernica, sive nobilis sive alia, quæ nubit Anglico cuicumque, post decessum mariti, tertia parte terrarum ac possessionum viri sui, eo ipso, quod Hibernica est, omnino privatur. Item Anglici, ubi possunt Hibernicum violenter opprimere, nullo modo permittunt, quod in ultimis voluntatibus Hibernici de suis rebus,* disponat aut testamentum condat quoquo modo, immo omnia bona† ipsorum appropriant sibi ipsis, privantes Ecclesiam jure suo, & sanguinem ab antiqus liberum facientes autoritate propria violenter‡ servilem. Item per commune consilium istius Regis Angliæ necnon & per quosdam Episcopos Anglicos, inter quos principalis extitit vir parvæ prudentiæ & nullius scientiæ Archiepiscopus Ardmacanus, quoddam iniquum statutum in civitate sancti Kennici in Hibernia nuper fuit factum sub hac informi forma. Concordatum est quod inhibeatur omnibus Religiosis, qui manent in terra pacis inter Anglicos, quod non recipiant in ordine suo, nec religione sua, nisi illos qui sunt de natione Anglorum ; & si aliter fecerint, Dominus rex capiet ad eos, tamquam ad illos, qui sunt præcepti sui contemptores, & eorum fundatores & advocati capient ad eos, sicuit ad illos qui sunt inobedientes & contrariantes isti ordinationi, factæ commune per consilium totius terræ Hiberniæ inter Anglicos. Et antequam hoc statutum factum fuisset, & post Fratres Prædicatores, Minores, Monachi, Canonici, ceterique Anglici Religiosi ipsum observabant

* Disponant aut condant. † Ipsius.

‡ Servilem, &c. Per commune insuper concilium.

satis stricte, personarum maxime acceptores, Monachorum tamen & Canonicorum Monasteria, in quibus moderno tempore Hibernici refutantur per ipsos, ut communiter, fuerunt fundata. Item ubi virtutes inserere, ac plantaria vitiorum debuerant extirpare, vitiis infusis per ipsos insertis, virtutes radicitus amputarunt.

LETTER

OF THE POPE IN REPLY, ADDRESSED TO THE KING OF ENGLAND.

From Mac-Geoghan's History.

Joannes Episcopus, servus servorum Dei, charissimo in Christo Filio Eduardo, illustri Angliæ Regi; Salutem & æternam Benedictionem.

Paternum amorem ad tuæ Celsitudinis incrementa, Fili charissime, gerimus, dum te ad ea, quæ justo placent judici tui regni, terrarum & subditorum tuorum sint oportuna quieti, & famæ tuæ pariter & honori prospiciant, sollicitis hortationibus invitamus. Propter quod in iis persuasiones nostras devota debes mente suscipere, & ad executionem illarum, te paratum & flexibilem exhibere. Ecce, Fili, quasdam accepimus literas directas pridem per Hibernicos Magnates & populum dilectis Filiis nostris Anselmo, tituli sanctorum Marcellini & Petri Præsbytero, & Lucæ S. Mariæ in via lata Diacono, Cardinalibus, Apostolicæ Sedis Nunciis, & per eos, nobis suis interclusas literas destinatas. In quarum serie vidimus inter cætera contineri, quod cùm felicis recordationis Adrianus Papa Prædecessor noster, sub certis modo & forma distinctis apertiùs Apostolicis Literis, inde factis claræ memoriæ Henrico Regi Angliæ; Progenitori tuo Dominium Hiberniæ concessisset, ipse Rex ac successores ipsius Reges Angliæ usque ad hæc tempora, modum & formam hujus modi non servantes, quinimò eos transgredientes, indebitè afflictionibus & gravaminibus inauditis importabilium servitutum ipsos diutius oppresserunt. Nec fuit hactenus, qui revocaret illata gravamina, aut errata corrigeret, non fuit quem pia compassio super eorum contritione moveret, quamvis super his ad te recursus habitus fuerit, et clamor vali-

dus oppressorum, aures tuas quandoque pulsaverit, unde talia ferre nequeuntes, ulterius coacti sunt se à Dominio tuo subducere, & alium in suum regimen advocare. Hæc, dilectissime Fili, si veritate nitantur, tanti nimirum infectiora nostris accedunt affectibus, quantò desideramus intentiùs, ut tibi prosperè cuncta cedant. Circa illa versari sedulò debes, eaque promptis affectibus exequi, quæ tuo sint placita Creatori, & ab omnibus abstinere sollicitè, per quæ contra te debeat provocari ipse Deus ac Dominus ultionum, qui gemitus afflictorum injustè minimè dispicit, & qui propter injustitias, peculiarem suum dejecisse discribitur populum, & translationem fecisse regnorum. Quantò etiam desiderabiliùs, iis præsertim, impacatis temporibus, cupimus te illis libenter intendere, per quæ suorum corda fidelium, ad tuam benevolentiam & obedientiam debeant allici, & illi prorsus vitare, quibus valeant à tuæ cultu devotionis avelli. Quia itaque, Fili, tuâ non modicum interest hujus novæ mutationis vitare dispendium, quamplurimumque expedit ut hæc non negligantur turbationis initia, ne illis periculosè crescentibus, serò medicinæ remedia præparentur. Excellentiam regiam sollicitamus attentè præsentibus, sano nihilominus consilio suadentes, quatenus hæc prudenti meditatione considerans, & cum suo discreto consilio conferens, super illis circa præmissorum gravaminum correctionem & reformationem debitam & festinam viis & modis & decentibus sic sufficienter provideri mandes & facias, sic discriminosis principiis in hac parte obstare procures, quod & illi, per quem regnas, placere valeas, & te in iis efficaciter implente quod debes, cujusvis adversum te justæ querelæ materia conquiescat. Per quod iisdem Hibernici saniori ducti consilio, tibi ut Domino pareant, aut si (quod absit) ineptâ rebellione manere voluerint, causam suam in apertam injustitiam, te apud Deum & homines excusato, convertant: Ut autem de prædictis gravaminibus & querelis, quibus prædicti innituntur Hibernici, tuis sensibus innotescat ad plenum; antedictas literas missas Cardinalibus antedictis, cum forma literarum, quas prædictus Adrianus Prædecessor noster eidem Henrico Regi Angliæ de terra Hiberniæ concessit, tuæ Magnitudini mittimus presentibus inclusas. Datum, &c.

OF THE ANCIENT DISPOSITION OF THE BISHOPRICKS OF IRELAND.

From Ware's Antiquities, Cap. xxi.

LET us now take a general view of the Episcopal Sees in *Ireland*. *John Paparo*, Cardinal Priest of St. *Lawrence*, in *Damasso*, was sent Legate into *Ireland*, by Pope *Eugene* the III., and brought with him four Palls, which in a Synod held in *March* 1152, he delivered to four Archbishops, viz. *Armagh*, *Dublin*, *Cashel*, and *Tuam*. Writers are not agreed in the place (or time) of holding this Synod. In this Synod a certain number of Suffragan Bishops was allotted and subjected to each Archbishop; which in the *Census Cameralis* of *Centius Camerarius*, (who was afterwards Pope *Honorius* the III.) are thus disposed:

Under the Archbishop of *Armagh*.

Bishopricks of	Or by the more modern Names called,
Conner,	*Conner*,
Dun-Daleghlas,	*Down*,
Lugud,	*Louth*,
Cluainiard,	*Clonard*,
Connanas,	*Kennanus or Kells*,
Ardacbad,	*Ardagh*,
Rathboth,	*Raphoe*,
Rathlurig,	*Rathlure*,
Damliag,	*Duleek*,
Darrich.	*Derry*.

I must here take the liberty of making a good many remarks on this distribution: for, if we descend to more modern times, not long after the arrival of the *English* in *Ireland*, the Sees of *Clonard*, *Kells*, and *Duleek*, were united, and the Bishops of this union, from that time forward, took their style from *Meath*, in which the said Sees were situated, and were called Bishops of *Meath*. So also the See of *Rathlure* was annexed to the diocess of *Derry*. As to the Bishoprick of *Louth*, the Prelate of that See was sometimes called Bishop of *Louth*, and sometimes Bishop of *Clogher*: for, although these two Sees were originally distinct, yet at last they were united, and continued so until the time of *David O'Brogan*, Bishop of *Clogher*, (who lived in the reign of King *Henry* the III.) at which time all the Deaneries of *Urgal* or *Uriel*, which formerly were subject to the Bishop of *Louth* or *Clogher*, together with the church of *Louth* itself, were forcibly separated from it, and annexed to the diocess of *Armagh*; for the recovery of which, there is yet extant a Citation instituted by the said *David O'Brogan*, against *Reiner*, Archbishop of *Armagh*, dated at *Peruse*, the 13th of *August*, 1252; although it was not attended with success. [The Sees of *Down* and *Connor* were afterwards united in the 15th century.] Lastly, it must not be omitted, that in this distribution there are wanting the Sees of *Dromore*, *Clonmacnois*, *Brefiny*, or *Triburna*; which last, in process of time, laid aside that old name, and took up the title of the See of *Kilmore*, from the time that *Andrew*, surnamed (as I think) *Brady*, Bishop of that place about the year 1453 (or 1454,) by the consent of Pope *Nicholas* the V. erected the Parish

... of St. *Felimy* of *Kilmore* into a Cathedral. As to the order of prece- ... observed between the Suffragan Bishops of *Ireland* in Councils and other ..., the Bishop of *Meath* held the first place, the Bishop of *Kildare* claimed ... second, and the rest were ranked according to the times of their ordination.

Under the Archbishop of *Dublin*.

Bishopricks of	*Clendelachi*, *Fern*, *Cainic*, *Leghlin*, *Childar*.	Afterwards called,	*Glendaloch*, *Ferns*, *Ossory*, *Leighlin*, *Kildare*.

The See of *Glen-da-loch*, which (in the Bull of Pope *Lucius* the III., dated Ano. 1182, and obtained at the suit of *John Comin*, Archbishop of *Dublin*,) was called the Bishoprick of the *Isles*, was afterwards united and annexed to the See of *Dublin* in the time of *Henry Loundres*, Archbishop of that See. Some have said, that the See of *Ferns* was anciently subject to the See of *Menevia* (St. *David's*) in *Wales*. But we pass by such imaginary conceits.

Under the Archbishop of *Cashel*.

Bishopricks of	*Cenduleum*, *Limerick*, *Insula Gathay*, *Cellumebrach*, *Ole-Imlech*, *Roscreen*, *Waltifordian*, *Lismor*, *Cluainvainian*, *Corcaia*, *Ross-Ailither*, *Ardfert*.	Afterwards called,	*Killaloe*, *Limerick*, *Inischatty*, *Fenabore* or *Kilfenoragh*, *Emly*, *Roscree*, *Waterford*, *Lismore*, *Cloyne*, *Cork*, *Ross*, *Ardfert*.

Of these, the See of *Inischatty* was, after the arrival of the *English*, annexed to that of *Limerick*, (or rather the possessions of it were divided between the Sees of *Limerick*, *Killaloe*, and *Ardfert*.) The See of *Roscree* was annexed to that of *Killaloe*. Those of *Waterford* and *Lismore* were united; as were afterwards *Cork* and *Cloyne*, (and upon the separation of that union, *Cork* and *Ross*.) *Emly* was annexed to *Cashel*.

Under the Archbishop of *Tuam*.

Bishopricks of	*Mageo*, *Cell-Alaid*, *Roscoman*, *Cluanfert*, *Achad*, *Cinani*, *Cellmun-duac*.	Afterwards called,	*Mayo*, *Killala*, *Roscoman*, *Clonfert*, *Achonry*, *Clonmacnois*, *Kimacduach*, commonly [*Kimacough*.

Of these, the Episcopal See of *Mayo* was afterwards annexed to *Tuam*; as also, (though omitted in the distribution) was that of *Enaghdune*. The Bishoprick of *Roscoman* was afterwards translated to *Elphin*, and *Clonmacnois* was added to the Province of *Armagh*, after a tedious suit at *Rome* between the Archbishops of *Armagh* and *Tuam*. For I cannot but think, that *Cinani* is, in

the distribution aforesaid, corruptly read for *Cluana*, (commonly called *Cluanmacnois*,) both from the affinity of the name, and vicinity of that See—being separated from the Province of *Tuam* only by the River *Shenon*.

I have thought it not amiss, out of an ancient manuscript, to add hereto the names of the bishops who assisted in the Synod, wherein this distribution was made; because it gives some light to the matter in hand.

Giola-Christ (or *Christian*) *O'Conarchi*, Bishop of *Lismore*, Legate.

Giola Mac-Liah (or *Gelasius*) Primate of *Ireland*.

Domnald O'Lonargain, Archbishop of *Munster*, i. e. *Cashel*.

Æda O'Hossin,* Archbishop of *Conaught*, i. e. *Tuam*.

Greri or *Gregory*, Bishop of *Ath-Cliath*, i. e. *Dublin*.

Giola-na-Næmb, Bishop of *Glendaloch*.

Dungal O'Cellaid, Bishop of *Leighlin*.

Tuistius, Bishop of *Waterford*.

Domnald O'Fogertaic, Bishop of *Ossory*, [called Vicar General Bishop of *Ossory* by *Keating*.]

Find Mac-Tiarcain, Bishop of *Kildare*.

Gillo-Ancomdeb (or *Deicola*) *O'Ardmail*, Bishop of *Emly*.

Giola-Æda O'Mugin [or *O'Heyn*, according to *Keating*,] Bishop of *Cork*.

Mac-Ronan, [called by *Keating*, *Maol Breanuin O'Ruanain*,] Bishop of *Kerry*, i. e. *Ardfert*.

Tvegesius, Bishop of *Limerick*.

Muirchertach O'Melider, Bishop of *Cluainmacnois*.

* "In Ware's list, Eda, or Aidan O'Hossin, (not O'Heyn, as the translator of Keating's original has) appears between O'Lonargain of Munster or Cashel, and Gregory of Dublin, and is called Archbishop of Connaught, *i. e.* Tuam. But he is not in Keating's text, as Colgan expressly remarks. Perhaps he was sick at the time: for it cannot be supposed, that he had any ecclesiastical objection to the Synod, as there was a pallium intended for him. The same pseudo-translator adds Griene to the name of Tuam, not knowing that Tuamgreine, now Tomgrany in the county of Clare, was quite different from the archiepiscopal town of Tuam in the county of Galway. He found Greine, or Greri, mentioned by Ware next after the word Tuam; but Ware's meaning is, that Greine, or Greri, was the same person as Gregory of Dublin. Among other alterations of Ware's words he has changed the name of O'Maigin, Bishop of Cork, into O'Heyn; and hence Harris (at Bishops of Cork) says, that O'Maigin is called O'Heyn by Keating. He should have said, by his translator: for, in Keating's original, the name is O'Maighin or Maigin, as Harris might have easily found in the various quotations from it by Colgan. Ware calls Domnald O'Fogarty Bishop of Ossory; and, in like manner, Gilda-An-choimde, Bishop of Emly. To the Bishop of Kildare he gives the surname not of Mac-Kienan, but of Mac-Tiarcain. He makes Mac-ronan Bishop of Kerry, or Ardfert, instead of Clonfert, and then leaves out Brendan, who was the real Bishop of Kerry. This was owing to his having found the name of Brendan occurring twice in this order: "*Mac-ronan, comorban of St. Brendan; Brendan, Bishop of Kerry.*" Now, by the former Brendan was meant the great St. Brendan, founder of the monastery of Clonfert; and by the latter Brendan, the then actual Bishop of Kerry or Ardfert. Ware confounded them into one Brendan, and thus made Mac-ronan Bishop of Kerry—a mistake which he has also (Bishops at Ardfert,) made, and in which he has been followed by Harris. He adds two Bishops not mentioned by Keating or Colgan, viz. Ethru O'Miadachain, Bishops of Clonard, and Tuathal

Meliosa O'Conachtain, Bishop of *Airthir Conaught*, [or *Oirthir Conacht*, i. e. *East-Conaught* or *Roscommon*.]

——*O'Ruadan*, Bishop of *Luigni*, i. e. *Achad* or *Achonry*, [called Bishop of *Luigni*, from a territory of that name, now the Barony of *Leny*, in the County of *Sligoe*, wherein *Achonry* lies.]

Macraith O'Morain, Bishop of *Conmacne*, i. e. *Ardagh*. [Called *Conmacne* from a territory of that name, in which *Ardagh* lay.]

Ethru O'Miadachain, Bishop of *Cluanairard*, i. e. *Clonard*.

Tuathal O'Connachtaig, Bishop of *Huambrusin*, i. e. *Enaghdune*.

Muirideach O'Cobthaig, Bishop of *Ceanla-eogain*, i. e. *Derry*.

Mal-Patrick O'Bainan, Bishop of *Dailaraid*, i. e. *Connor*.

Meliosa Mac-Inclericuir, Bishop of *Ullagh*, i. e. *Down*.

To the rest, whose titles are for the most part borrowed from the territories in which their Sees are situated, we have before added the more modern names.

There were also other Episcopal Sees in *Ireland* before the arrival of Cardinal *Paparo*, of which mention is made by the writers of *Ireland*, as of *Trim*, *Sletty*, *Lusc*, *Ardmore*, *Ardsrath*, *Slane*, and (to pass over the rest) *Saigre*. But these were added and annexed to other Sees, partly by the Synod before mentioned, some of them before it, and others a little after. Finally, if we look back on the first ages of the infant church of *Ireland*, *Jocelin*, of *Furns*, in the Life of *St. Patrick*, Ch. 186, affirms, that St. *Patrick* consecrated 350 Bishops, (*Nennius* says 365) with his own hands. Let that be how it will, it is manifest that the Episcopal Sees of that age, being for the most part seated in small villages, were, not long after, reduced to a much less number.

O'Connachtaigh, Bishop of Huambriuin, which he explains by Enaghdune, now Annadown. The conmacne, of which Mac-crath O'Morain was Bishop, he explains by Ardagh; for one of the districts, called by that name, was in the now county of Longford. But he is not right in making Muredach O'Cobtaich Bishop of Derry at the time of the council of Kells: for, in the first place, Kinel-Eogain, of which he is called Bishop, was the territory now called Tyrone, which did not comprise the district about Derry: and we find among the signatures to the foundation charter of the Cistercian abbey of Newry his name under the title of Bishop of Tir-eoghain. Secondly, Ware himself (Bishops at Derry) does not make him Bishop of Derry until after Flathbert O'Brolcan, who became Bishop of that see in 1158, and lived for some years after. As to the particular name of Muredach's see in Tyrone, it was not Clogher, whose Bishop was then Edan O'Killedy, and who, by the bye, did not attend at the Synod. Besides, the Bishops of Clogher used to be styled Bishops of Ergall or Oriel. I have no doubt, that it was the ancient see of Ardsrath, or Ardstraw, in Tyrone, otherwise called Rathlure. Keating makes mention of it, under the name of Ardsrath, as existing at the time of the Synod of Rathbreasil. (Chap. 25. § 13.) But, when treating of the council of Kells, he calls it Rathlure."

"In the old book of Flannan Mac-Eogan, there is another list of the Prelates assembled at Kells, which has been published by Dr. O'Connor, 2 Prol. p. 159. In it we find Aed O'Ossin of Tuam. The Bishop of Kildare is called Mac-Tiarcain. Gilla Aeda O'Maigin of Cork is omitted. Domnald O'Fogarty is called bishop of Ossory. Torgesius of Limerick is omitted; but in his stead Gilla Anchomdbe O'Hardmaol appears as Bishop of that see. This is evidently a mistake: for he belonged to Emly, either as Bishop or Vicar. Likewise Mac-Ronan of Clonfert is omitted. In this list are the Bishops of Clonard and Huambriuin, as mentioned by Ware."—Lanigan, vol. 4, p. 144, 145.

NAMES OF THE BISHOPS

WHO GOVERNED THE SEVERAL DIOCESSES OF IRELAND PREVIOUSLY TO THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

Extracted from Harris's Ware and from Lanigan.

ARMAGH.

	Ware.	Lanigan.
St. Patrick	Died 493	465
St. Benignus, (Binen)	468	
Jarlath	482	
Cormac	497	
Dubtach, 1	513	
Aillid, 1	526	
Ailid, 2	536	
Dubtach, 2	548	
David (Mac-Guaire, Hua Farannan)	551	
Feidlimid	478	
Cairlan	588	
Eochaid (Mac-Dermod)	598	
Senach	610	
Mac-Laisir	623	
Thomian (Mac-Ronan)	661	
Segene	688	
Flan Febla	715	
Suibny	730	
Congusa	750	
Cele-Peter	758	
Ferdachry	768	
Foendelach, resigned 771	794	795
Dubdalethy, 1	793	786
Affiat	794	787
Cudinscus	798	791
Conmach	807	805
Forbach (Mac-Gorman)	808	
Nuad (Mac-Segene)	812	
(Flanguss) Mac-Loingle	822	826
Artrigius	833	

		Ware.	Lanigan.
Eugene (Monaster)	Died	834	
Faranan*		852	
Dermod (O'Tigernach)		852	
Factna or Fethgna		874	
Adnmire		875	
Catasach (Mac-Rabartach)		883	879
Mælcob (Mac-Crunnvail)		885	
Mæl-Brigid (Mac-Dornan)		927	
Joseph†		930	
Mæl-Patrick (Mac-Maoltule)		936	
Catasach 2nd, (Mac-Dulgen)		957	
Muredach (Mac-Fergus, deposed 966.)			
Dubdalethy 2d, (Mackellach)		998	
Murechan, resigned 1001.			
Maelmurry, or Marian		1021	1020
Amalgaid		1050	1049
Dubdalethy 3d		1065	1064
Cumasach (O'Herudan,) resigned 1065.			
Mœlisa (Mac-Amalgaid)		1092	1091
Donald (Mac-Amalgaid)		1106	1105
Celsus (Mac-Aid-Mac-Mœlisa)		1129	
Maurice (Mac-Donald)		1134	
Malachy O'Morgair, (Apostolick legate,) resigned 1137.			
Gelasius (Mac-Roderick)		1174	
Cornelius (Mac-Concalede)		1175	
Gilbert (O'Caran)		1180	
Mælisa O'Carrol (Thomas O'Connor succeeded Gilbert, but he resigned,)		1184	
Amlave O'Murid		1185	
Thomas O'Connor, the same who had reigned		1201	

MEATH

Was formerly divided into many episcopal Sees, as Clonard, Duleek, Kells, Trim, Ardbraccan, Donshaughlin, Slane, and Foare, &c. &c.

St. Kienan fixed his See at Duleek		489	
St. Suarla——————at Foare		745	746
St. Ercus——————at Slane		513	
Ultan——————at Ardbraccan		656	657
Secundinus, at Dunshaughlin			448

St. Loman established his See at Trim in the seventh century.

* This Prelate was expelled from his See by Turgesius in 848.

† According to Lanigan, Joseph's successors were—1st, Cathasach; 2nd, Mælpatrick, and 3rd, Melnarch. Cathasach died 946; Mælpatrick 952; Melnach 955.

CLONARD.*

	Ware.	Lanigan.
St. Finnian	Died 563	552
St. Senach	587	588
St. Fiacre.		
Colman	652	610
Ossenius	652	
Ultan O'Cunga died of the plague which afflicted both Britain and Ireland in	664	665
Becan	687	688
Colman O'Heir	700	
Dubdan O'Foelan, B. and Ab.	716	717
Aelchu	726	727
Fienmale M'Girthid	731	
Tola M'Dunchad, B. of Clonard and Kildare	732, or 733—734	
Beglatneu	755	
Fulertach, B.	774	775
Algnied	778	
Cormac Mac-Suibny, B. Scribe and Abbot	828	829
Rumond, or Rumold Mac-Cathsach, B. of Clonard	919	920
Colman Mac-Ailild	924	925
Ferdomnach Mac-Flanagan	930	
Moctean (called also Mœel-Mocthe)	940	
Mœclfechin	942	
Becan Mac-Lactnan	971	
Faitham	1010	
Tuathal O'Dunluing	1028	
Cellach O'Clerchen	1043	
Tuathal O' Follanmuim	1055	
Tigernac Boircech	1061	
Muchertach Mac-Longsec	1092	
Indunan, called B. of Meath, flourished in 1096.		
Concovar	1117	
Fiachry	1135	
Gilla Christ, or, Christian O. Hagan	1136	
Eochaid O'Kelly, A. B. of the Men of Meath	1140	
O. Folloman†	1150	
Elentherius O'Miadachin	1174	
Eugene, B. Meath	1194	
Simon Rochfort	1224	

* "There are but slender memoirs remaining of the successors of St. Finnian in the See of Clonard, until the arrival of the English in Ireland. Those who follow, except Idunan, are mentioned in the Annals of Ireland, as Colgan says." —Harris' Ware, p. 139.

† Some of the Ecclesiasticks whose names have been here recited were called only Abbots of Clonard. Whether these were or were not Bishops, also, is uncertain.

CLONMACNOIS.

	Ware.	Lanigan.
St. Kieran was the first Bishop of the See, according to Harris	Died 540	
Dr. Lanigan says that he never rose beyond the rank of Priest.		
St. Tigernach*	549	
Baitan O'Cormact†	663	
Joseph‡	839	840
Moeldraius	885	887
Corprey Crom	899	900
Colman	924	925
Cormac O'Killeen	964	965
Tuthal	569	
Dunchal O'Braoin,‖ resigned 974 . . .	987	
Ectigern O'Ergain	1052	
Colocair	1067	
Ailild O'Harretaigh	1070	
Christian O'Hectigern	1103	
Donald O'Dubhai	1136	
Moriertach O'Melider	1152	
Tigernach O'Moeleoin	1172	
Mureach O'Murechan	1213	

CLOGHER.

St. Macarthan	506
St. Tigernach	550
St. Sinell.	
Deodcagha Mac-Cairvill.	
Feidlmid.	
Ultan, Sethene, Earch Eirglean, Ceddach, Crimir-Rodan.	
St. Laseran	563, or 571
Tigerna Altigeraa.	
Enna, or Ende Mac-Conail.	
Ronan.	
Ædan.	
Moelcob flourished A. D. 640.	
St. Adamnanus.	
Dianach.	
Altigren.	
Kiaran.	

* Tigernach was according to Dr. Lanigan, Bishop of Clones and of Clogher, also; but he never governed the See of Clonmacnois. St. Kieran's successor was Oena, who died A. D. 570.

† Dr. Lanigan represents Baithen as the first Bishop of Clonmacnois.—Vol. 2, p. 60.

‡ Joseph was Abbot of Clones, and not Bishop of Clonmacnois.—Lan. vol. 3. p. 276.

‖ Dunchad, though elected Bishop, never received the episcopal consecration. Lan. vol. 3, p. 889.

	Ware.	Lanigan.
Conall.		
Airmeadach.		
Foeldobar	Died 731	
Cunnacht, Mœlmochair, Synach.		
Artgail, Mac-Dairin, Caibre.		
Moeldin, Dermot, Conaid I.		
Moraind.		
Dubroith.		
Ailil	898	
Cairbere II. Ængus.		
Cenfail	929	
Conaid II. Tomultach. Cellach. Odo.		
Murigach. O'Buigil.		
Mac Mal. Iosa O'Cullean.		
Christian O'Morgair	1139	
Edan O'Kelly	1182	
Melisa O'Carrol	1184	
Christian O'Macturan	1191	
Maelisa (Mac-Mail-Ciaran)	1195	
Tigernac, (Mac-Gilla-Ronan)	1218	
Doctor Lanigan deems Colgan's Catalogue of the Bishops of Clogher more generally accurate than that of Ware. According to Colgan the See of Clogher was established by St. Patrick. After St. Patrick it was governed		
By St. Macartin . . . who died, A. D.	506	
St. Tigernach	553	
Liberius.		
Aitmetus.		
Hermetius.		
The names that follow are given in the Annals of the Four Masters:		
Feldobar . . . . Died	731	
Ardgal, Ab. of Clogher	765	
Moran, ditto ditto	841	
Ailild	867	
Kenfail, Comorban of Clogher . . .	929	
Conaing O'Domnallan	959	
Muredach O'Cuillen	1126	
Christian O'Morgair, &c. as in Ware's Catalogue of The Bishops of Clogher.		

DOWN.

St. Cailan*	499	540
Fergus	583	584
Fingen	962	

* It is dubious, according to Lanigan, whether St. Cailan ever became a Bishop.—Lan. vol. 1, p. 422.

	Ware.	Lanigan.
Flagertach	Died 1043	
Samuel, assisted at a Synod held in Ireland in 1097	1137	
Malachy O'Morgair	1148	
Malachy (Mac-Inclericuir)	1175	
Gelasius M'Cormac	1175	
Malachy, Third	1201	

CONNOR.

Ængus Macnaius	507, or 514	
Lugade	537	538
Dima	658	959
Duononna	725	
Ægedcarus	865	866
Malbrigid, *Son of Redan*	954	955
Malachy O'Morgair, resigned 1134.		
Patrick O'Bainan, resigned before 1172.		
Nehemiah, succeeded A. D. 1172.		
Reginald, succeeded A. D. 1183.		
Christian O'Kerney	1210	

KILMORE.

"St. Fedlimid (who lived in the sixth century,) is called by some, Bishop of Kilmore: but there does not appear to have been any episcopal See in that place until 15th century."—Lan. vol. 2, p. 10. Dr. Lanigan adds, Note 39, p. 11—"Ware (Bishops at Kilmore) says, that the Bishops of the diocess, known by this name, were called Bishops of Breffney, (the name of the territory,) or of Triburna, an obscure village where they resided, until, in the year 1454, Andrew M'Brady, Bishop of Triburna, erected, with the consent of Pope Nicholas V. the parish church of St. Fedlimid, at Kilmore, into a cathedral. He adds, that there seems not to have been any episcopal See in that district until a late period, and that the first Bishop he had met with there was Flan O'Conacty, called the Bishop of Breffney, who died in 1231."

ARDAGH.

St. Mell.	Died 488
St. Melchuo, his brother, succeeded.	
St. Errard, B. lived about the eighth century.	
Ceili	1048
Macrait O'Moran	1168
Christian O'Heotai	1179
O'Tirlenan	1187
O'Hislenan	1189
Adam O'Murredai	1217

DROMORE.

St. Colman died, Harris conjectures about 610.	
Melbrigid Mac-Cathasaige	972
Rigan	1101
Gerard, a Cistercian Monk	1245

RAPHOE.	WARE.	LANIGAN.
St. Eunan.*		
Melbrigid Mac-Dornan.† (This Prelate was promoted to Armagh,)	Died 927	
Malduin Mac-Kinfalaid died about 930.		
Ængus O'Lapáin	957	958
Muredach O'Dubthaigh‡	1173	
Gilbert O'Caran,‖ resigned 1175.		
Maelisa O'Dorigh succeeded in 1203.		
DERRY.		
The first Bishop of this diocess had his See first established at Ardsrath, on the River Derg, of which St. Eugene was the first Bishop. It was afterwards translated to Maghere, which was dedicated to St. Luroch; and from thence the Bishops were styled Bishops of Rathlure. By a decree of the Synod of Brigth-thaigh, A. D. 1158, at which Christian, the Pope's Legate, presided, an episcopal See was fixed at Derry.—Harris' Ware, p. 286.		
Flathbert O'Brolcan, appointed the first Bishop in 1158.		
Maurice O'Coffey	1173	
Amlave O'Coffey	1185	
Florence O'Cherballen	1230	
DUBLIN.		
Doctor Lanigan holds, that Dublin was not a regular See until the eleventh century, when Donatus became Bishop of it. Sedulius, who died in 786, is, he asserts, the only Bishop that Dublin can lay claim to before the eleventh century.—L. vol. 3, p. 228. Livinus, Disibod, &c. were, according to him, erroneously called Bishops of Dublin by some forcigners, who were wont in latter times to give to some of our Bishops, whose Sees were not known, the title of Bishop or Archbishop of Dublin, L. vol. 3, p. 198.		
Livinus is said to have suffered martyrdom in Flanders	633	
St. Wiro	650	
Disbod resigned 675.		
Gualafer.	-	-
St. Rumold	775	

* Dr. Lanigan thinks that St. Eunan is no other than St. Adamnan, Abbot of Hy, who was the patron Saint of Raphoe, even before this place became an episcopal See. The same author also asserts, that Malduin Mac-Kinfalaid, who died about the year 930, was the first Bishop of Raphoe.—Lan. vol. 3, p. 99.

† Melbrigid was Abbot of the monastery at Raphoe; but in his time, Raphoe was not a Bishop's See.—Lan. vol. 3, p. 342.

‡ It is certain that this Prelate died Bishop of Derry in 1173: but it is very questionable, whether he was ever Bishop of Raphoe.—Harris' Ware, p. 270.

‖ The immediate successor of Gilbert resigned in 1198. The name of this Bishop has not been preserved.—*Ibid.*

	Ware.	Lanigan.
Sedulius	Died 785	786
Cormac.		
Donatus	1074	
Patrick	1084	
Donat O'Haingly	1095	
Samuel O'Haingly	1121	
Gregory, first Archbishop	1161	
St. Laurence O'Toole	1180	
John Comyn	1212	

GLENDALOCH.

It is probable that St. Coemgen was not a Bishop: yet Glendaloch became, not long, it seems, after his death, an episcopal See.—Lan. vol. 2, p. 45.

St. Coegmene, or Keivin, resigned his See 612, .	618	
St. Molibba, succeeded 612.		
Aidan.		
Ampadan.		
Dungall Mac-Baithen	899	900
Cormac Mac-Fitz-Bran*	925	
Gilda Na-Naomht	1085	
Cormac O'Mail	1101	
Gilda Na-Naomh, 2nd, was Bishop 1152.		
Kinad O'Ronan	1173	
Malchus, or Macrobius, was Bishop 1179.		
William Piro	1214	

After whose death Glendaloch was united to the See of Dublin.

KILDARE.

"The sort of ecclesiastical Primacy observed in Leinster was first attached to the See of Sletty, whence it was removed to Ferns upon the ordination of St. Moedoc, about the latter end of the sixth century. Next, (but at what precise time cannot be ascertained,) it was granted to Kildare. * * That said Primacy returned at any time from Ferns to Kildare, there is no authority whatever to prove. It was still at Kildare in the latter end of the eleventh century."—Lanig. vol. 3, p. 372 and 373.

St. Conlaeth	515	
St. Aed	638	
Lochan	694	695
Farrannan†	697	698

* Cormac, it is probable, was only Abbot of Glendaloch.

† Gilda resigned his See and became Abbot of the Irish monastery at Wurtzburgh.

‡ As Lochen and Farannan, and others, named in this list, are called only Abbots in the Annals of the Foer Masters, it is dubious, whether they should be reckoned among the Bishops of Kildare.

	Ware.	Lanigan.
Moeldoborcon	Died 708	705
Tola*	732	
Dima, called also Modimoe and Dodimoe, Ab. of Kildare and Clonard	743	
Cathald O'Forannan, Ab.	747	
Lomtuil	782, or 785—783	
Snedbran, in the same year	Ditto.	Ditto.
Muredach O'Cathald, Ab.	Ditto.	Ditto.
Eudocius O'Diocholla, Ab.	793	
Fœlan O'Kellach, Ab.	799	
Lactan O'Muctigern	813	
Murtagh O'Kellach, Ab.	820	
Siedhul, or Sedulius, Ab.	828	
Tuadcar	833	
Orthanach	840	
Ædgene, *surnamed Brito*	862	863
Cobthach O'Muredach, Ab.	868	
Moengal succeeded Ædgen, (Lan. vol. 3, p. 322,)	870	
Lasran Mac-Moctigern†	874	
Suibhne	888	
Scannal	884	
Largisius	885	
Crunmoel	929	
Mœlfinan	949, or 950	
Culean Mac-Kellach, Ab.	953	
Mured Mac-Fœlan, Ab.	965	
Arnucaid	981	
Murechad, Comorban of Conlath	985	
Mœl-Martin	1028	
Mœl-Brigid	1042	
Fin Mac-Gussan	1085	
Mœl-Brigid (O'Brolcan)	1097	
Aid O'Heremon,	1100	
Ferdomnac‡	1102	
Mac-Dongail	1108	
Cormac O'Cathsuigh	1146	
O'Dubhin	1148	
Finan (Mac-Tiarcain)	1160	
Malachy O'Birn	1176	

* In Colgan's very minute Catalogue of the Bishops, Abbots, &c. of Kildare, St. Tola is not mentioned.

† Harris conjectures that this is the same person as Lactan O'Muctigern, before mentioned.—Harris' Ware.

‡ According to Lanigan, Ferdomnac succeeded Fin, and resigned about 1096. After Ferdomnac Mœl-Brigid became Bishop of Kildare, and was succeeded by Aidus O'Heremon.—Lan. vol. 3, p. 452.

	Ware. Lanigan.
Nehemiah	Died 1195
Cornelius Mac-Gelany	1222

OSSORY.

St. Kiaran,* the first Bishop of Saigir, which See was removed to Agaboe, and afterwards to Kilkenny .	549
Carthagh the elder, appointed by Kiaran, his successor, died, it is said, ...	540
Sidna, called Sedonius, was B. of Saigir 570.	
Killene M'Lubney, Ab. assisted at the Synod convened by Flanflebla, 695.	
Langdene M'Donennah, Ab. of Saigir . . .	739
Funtgall, Ab.	771
Mocoach, Ab.	783
Cucathach, Ab.	788
Cobthaich, Ab. (Colgan says in 1807) . . .	801
Ferodach, Ab.	809
Conchovar, Ab.	810
Conmach, Ab.	826
Irgolach, Ab.	832
Anluain, Ab.	846
Cormac M'Eladach, Ab.	867
Geran, Ab.	868
Slogad O'Raithnin, Ab.	885
Cormac, Bishop of Saigir	907
Fugall M'Moelmore, Ab.	919
Fogartach, Ab.	941
Kenfoilad M'Swiny, Ab.	951
Flathlen (Archennach of Saigir) . . .	984
Fogartach, Ab. of Saigir and Glendaloch . .	1004
Dunchad O'Killichnir, Comorban of Kiaran . .	1048
Killach Ramhar, Comorban of Kiaran . . .	1079
Donald O'Fogarty, called B. of Ossory . . .	1178
Felix O'Delany, a Cistercian Monk. He is said to have removed the See to Kilkenny	1202

FERNS.

St. Edan, appointed 598	632
St. Moling, succeeded 632.	
Dochua,† or Mocuan Luacra	652
Tuenoch M'Fintan	665
Conan‡	675

* Ware confounds Kiaran of Saigir with Kiaran of Clonmacnois. Doctor Lanigan thinks that Sedna was the immediate successor of St. Kiaran, and that Carthagh was never Bishop of Saigir.—Vol. 2, p. 99.

† Dachua was the immediate successor of St. Aidan.—Lan. vol. 3, p. 33.

‡ Conan, erroneously supposed to have been Bishop of Ferns, died A. D. 678.—Lan. vol. 3, p. 128.

WARE. LANIGAN.

Madogair,* called Moldogair	Died 676
Diartus, died, some say, 690	692
Cillenius, or Killenus†	714
Aructarius M'Cuanach, Ab.	737
M'Colgan, Ab.	744
Reodaigh, Ab.	758
Dubenracht M'Fergus, Ab.	776
Finnachta, Ab.	794
Killene, Ab.	814
Laigdnene‡	937
Flathguss, Ab.	944
Finacht M'Lactan	956
Corbre M'Laigdnen, Ab.	965
Conan M'Cathan, Ab.	975
Conn, or Constans O'Laigdnen, Ab.	996
Cornelius O'Laigdnen Archinach	1043
Dermod O'Rudican	1048
Marchad O'Laigdnen Archinach	1062
Flan O'Corboy.	
Flodgad O'Haurecan.	
Nelan Mac-Donegan.	
Ugair O'Laigdnen Archinach	1085
Carbrie O'Kerny, B.	1095
Gelasy, or Killach O'Colman	1117
Carthag O'Magibay.	
Melisa O'Cathar.	
Roderick O'Trassy	1172
Brigdin O'Cathlan.	
Joseph O'Hethe, called B. of Wexford	1185
Abin O'Mulloy, succeeded 1186	1222

LEIGHLIN.

St. Laserian	638	639
Manchen‖	865,or863	726
Condla M'Dunecan	943	
Daniel	969	
Cleirec O'Muinic	1048	
Condla O'Flain	1113	
Sluagad O'Catan	1144	

* Maldogair succeeded Tuenoch.—Lan. vol. 3, p. 128.

† Killenus' predecessor was St. Moling, who died in 697.—L. vol. 3, p. 132.

‡ Laidgnen is the only person who may with any certainty be considered as Bishop of Ferns from the time of Killen, who died in 714, until that of Diermit Hua Rodachan, who lived in the eleventh century.—Lan. vol. 3, p. 370.

‖ It is not certain whether St. Manchen rose to any higher station than that of Abbot.

	Ware.	Lanigan.
Dungall O'Cellaic	Died 1153	
Donat, was B. 1158	1185	
John, a Cistercian Monk	1210	

CASHEL.

Cormac M'Culinan	908	
Donald, or Dufnald O'Hene	1097, or 1099	
Miler, or Melmurry O'Duman	1118	
Melisa O'Foglada	1131	
Donat O'Coming	1137	
Donat O'Lonargan	1158	
Donald O'Hulluean	1182	
Maurice	1191	
Matthew O'Heney	1206	

EMLY.

St. Ailbe, called the Patrick of Munster . .	527	
Conaing O'Daikil, Ab. and Comorban . . .	661, or 669	
Conamail Maicartidge, or Maicarthy . . .	707	
Cellach	718	
Senchair	778	
Cuan	780, or 784	
Sectabrat	819	
Flan M'Farnchelliac	825	
Olchobar M'Kinede, King of Cashel, and B. of Emly .	850	
Mamus M'Huargusa	857	
Confelad, King of Cashel, and B. of Emly . .	872	
Rudgall M'Fingail	882	
Concenmathair	887	
Owen M'Cenfoelad	889	
Molbrigid	895	896
Miscelsus	898	
Flan M'Conail	903	
Fibraid M'Milfin	912	
Edchada M'Scanlain	951	
Huarach	953	
Mel Kellach	957	
Foelan M'Cellaid	981	
Cenfada	990	
Columb M'Lagenan	1003	
Cormac O'Fin	1020	
Serbrethar	1027	
Melfinan	1040	
O'Flanchua	1047	
Clothna Muimmih	1049	
Melmorda	1075	
Melisa O'Harachtain	1093	

	Ware.	Lanigan.
O'Ligbai		Died 1122
Molmorda M'Inclodnai succeeded O'Ligbai.		
Deicola, assisted at the Synod held by Paparo in 1152.		
Molisa O'Lagimon		1163
O'Meiciti		1172
Charles O'Buacabla		1177
Isaiah O'Hamery.		
Reginald O'Flansea		1197
Henry		1227

LIMERICK.

St. Munchin*		652
Gille, or Gilbert, Legate of Ireland		1140
Patrick.		
Harold		1151
Torgesius		1152
Brictius		1179
Donat O'Brien		1207

ARDFERT.

Ert.†		
Cerpain‡		500
Dermod Mac-Mel-Brenan		1075
Magrath O'Erodain, or O'Ronan		1099
Mac-Ronan, lived in 1152.		
O'Ronan		1161
Some think the two latter names to belong to the same person.		
Gilla Mac-Aidolin O'Hanmada		1166
Donald O'Conarchy		1193
David O'Duibditrib		1207

WATERFORD.

Malcus, first Bishop of Waterford, ordained at Canterbury 1096.

* In the list of the Bishops of Limerick, in Harris' Ware, an account is given of the See of Iniscathy, which was united to that of Limerick about the 12th or 13th century. St. Patrick is represented as the founder of that See. After his time it was governed by the following Bishops and Abbots:—

St. Senan,	died 544	Flathbert, Ab.	died 990
Odran,	580	Colla, Ab.	994
Aidan 1.		O'Burgus, Comorban	1081
Aidan 2.	861	Aid O'Beachain,	1188

Soon after his death Iniscathy was united to Limerick. Lanigan maintains, that Munchin never became Bishop, and that Limerick was not a Bishop's See until the 12th century.

† It is dubious whether Ert was ever Bishop of Ardfert.

‡ It is also dubious, whether Ardfert was the See over which Cerpain presided.—Lanigan, vol. 1, p. 422.

		Ware.	Lanigan.
Melisa O'Haisire, Bishop	Died 1156		
Tuistus O'Rostius was Bishop 1182.			
Augustin, in a Council held at Windsor 1175, got the Bishoprick from Henry II. who sent him back to be consecrated by Donat, A. B. of Cashel.			
Augustin sent to the Council of Lateran 1179.			
Robert	1200		
LISMORE.			
St. Carthagh, Ab. of the Abbey of Rathony; became Bishop of Lismore 631	637		
Theologus	698		699
Colman Mochohnoc	709		708
St. Cronan	719		718
Colman O'Linthan	725		726
Macoge	746		
Ronan*	763		
Cormac M'Culinan	918		
O'Mail Sinaig	1025		
Moriertach O'Sibbar	1034		
Mac-Arithur	1064		
Mael Duni O'Rebacain	1091		
Mac-Mic-Aeducan	1113		
Gilla† Mocudu O'Rebacain	1129		
Malchus‡ [Flor. 1134.]			
Christian O'Conarchy succeeded in 1150, resigned 1175,	1186		
O'Danus, a Cistercian Monk, is said by Sequin to have succeeded Christian.			
Felix	1206		
CORK.			
St. Barr, or Finbar,‖ flourished about 630.			
St. Nessan.§			
Russin¶	685		
Silbac	773		
Cathmogan	961		
Columb M'Cairucain	990		
Cellack O'Selback	1025		
Neil O'Mailduib	1027		

* Dr. Lanigan doubts if Ronan were ever Bishop of Lismore.

† Gilla Mocuda O'Rebacain, undoubtedly no other than an Abbot of that name who died in 1128.—Lan. vol. 4, p. 74.

‡ Malchus, an Irishman, a Monk of Winchester, probably the immediate successor of Mac-Mic Aednen—was Bishop in 1123.—Lan. vol. 4, p. 74.

‖ St. Barr, or Finbar, raised to the episcopacy about the beginning of the 7th century—died about 623.—Lan. vol. 2, p. 315.

§ St. Nessan, a disciple of St. Barr, was not a Bishop.—Ibid. p. 317.

¶ Russin, successor of St. Barr, in all probability a Bishop—died 685—Lan. vol. 3, p. 129.

	Ware.	Lanigan.
Aitri Laiet	Died 1028	
Cathal	1034	
Mugron O'Mutan	1057	
Cluech O'Selbaic	1086	
Maclothod O'Hailgenon	1107	
Patrick O'Selbac	1111	
It is said the See was vacant in 1140, and that Malachy, A. B. of Armagh, nominated a Bishop, whose name is not now known.		
Gilla Aeda O'Mugin	1172	
Gregory	1186	
Reginald.		
O'Selbaic, probably one and the same with Reginald	1205	

CLOYNE.

St. Colman	604	
O'Malvain	1094	1095
Nehemiah O'Morierthach	1149	
O'Dubery	1159	
O'Flanagan	1167	
Matthew	1192	
Laurence O'Sullivan	1204	

ROSS.

St. Fachnan* Mongach.

St. Finchad.†

Dongal Mac-Folad, whom Flaherty makes the 27th Bishop of Ross, after Fachnan.

Benedict	1172

Maurice,‡ succeeded in 1197.

Florence	1222

KILLALOE.‖

St. Flannan,§ disciple of St. Molua, consecrated at Rome 639.

* If St. Fachtera, or Fachnan of Ross, was a Bishop, as there is good authority for admitting, the See of that place existed, very probably, before the year 570.—Lan. vol. 2. p. 193.

† St. Finchad is said, without any foundation, to have succeeded St. Fachnan. *Ibid.*

‡ Maurice died about 1196. He had succeeded Benedict, who was Bishop there in 1172, and who seems to have died about 1190. Maurice's immediate successor was Daniel, a Secular Priest, consecrated at Rome by the Bishop of Albano, in virtue of an order of Celestin, whom Daniel had imposed upon by means of forged letters. Daniel was deposed, and Florence consecrated by the A. B. of Cashel, the Pope's Legate.—Lan. vol. 4, p. 329.

‖ Killaloe, in Irish, Kill-da-lua, or Cell of Lua, is supposed to have got its name from St. Molua, either from his having lived there, or from its having been dedicated in his name.—Lan. vol. 2, p. 205, 216.

§ St. Flannan was not a disciple of St. Molua: his birth must, at the earliest, be assigned to between 640 and 650. It is not known when he became Bishop, or whether he went to Rome.—Lan. vol. 3, p. 146.

	Ware.	Lanigan.
Cairmacan O'Muilconhol	Died 1019	
O'Germidhidir	1055	
Feig O'Feig	1068	
O'Lonergan	1161	
Donat O'Brien	1165	
Constantine O'Brien	1179	
Dermot O'Coning. He was deprived in 1195 by O'Heny, A. B. of Cashel: the cause is not mentioned.		
Charles O'Heney	1195	
Cornelius O'Heney	1216	

TUAM.

St. Jarlath	About 540	
Ferdomnach*	781	
Eugene M'Clerig	969	
Murchad O'Niac	1033	
Aid O'Hoisin	1065	
Ercad O'Melomair	1096	
Cormac O'Caril	1091,	or 1090
Castasach O'Cuail, or O'Connil	1117,	or 1118
Murgisius O'Niov	1128	
Donald O'Dubhair	1136	
Maurice, or Muredach O'Dubhair	1150	
Edan O'Hossin	1161	
Catholicus O'Dubhaire	1210	

MAYO.

United to Tuam, according to Ware, in 1210.

St. Gerald†	About 697	
Muredach	726	
Aiden	768	
Cele O'Daubhair	1209	

KILFENORA.

"The history of the See of Kilfenora, or, as Ware calls it, *Fenabore*, is so obscure, that he was not able to decide by whom it was founded. In one place (Antiq. cap. 28,) he says—"It may be judged that St. Fachnan was the founder." In another (Bishops) he merely states, that its cathedral was dedicated to his memory. He clearly seems to have meant St. Fachnan of Ross. And so the matter appears to be understood at present in the diocese of Kilfenora, whereas the festival of the patron saint is kept there on the 14th of August as if St. Fachnan of Ross was he also of Kilfenora. But it is much more probable, that they were different persons. That Fachnan of Ross did not found

* Dr. Lanigan observes, (vol. 3, p. 203,) that he could not learn on what authority Ware numbers Ferdomnach among the Bishops of Tuam.

† St. Gerald is called Bishop in some Irish documents: but it is very doubtful whether he was entitled to this appellation. He lived until 732.—Lan. vol. 3, p. 166, 167.

that See, or even a monastery there, is evident, from its not being mentioned in the Calenders, where treating of him, notwithstanding the care taken not to omit, that, besides Ross, he had governed also a house in Darinis. Why not mention likewise Kilfenora, had he been there, especially as it became an episcopal See? It may be said, that Fachnan was revered there not as founder of the See, but as the Saint, in whose name the church was dedicated, long, perhaps, before there was any Bishop of Kilfenora. Yet I can hardly believe that Kilfenora had not a Fachnan or Fachtna of its own. Among the real or pretended disciples of St. Barr, we find, besides Fachnan of Ross, a St. Fachna de Ria. (AA. SS. p. 750.) He is the *Fachtnanus* of Usher, (Pr. p. 971,) a distinct person from Fachtna Mongich, or of Ross, there mentioned. Whether this Fachna, or Fachnan de Ria was a scholar, or not, of St. Barr, is of little consequence; but it cannot be doubted, that such a person did exist in old times, probably in the seventh century. Why may we not suppose, that he was the founder of Kilfenora? Its very name seems to lead to this conclusion. Fachnan is often called *Fechnan*. *Kilfenora* is a compound name, thus probably formed: *Kil.fen* (a contraction of Fechnan)—*o* de, or from—*Ra*, or *Ria*."—*Lanigan, vol.* 2, *p.* 196.

The first Bishop of this See, whose name has been preserved, is Christian, who died A. D, 1254.

ELPHIN.	Ware.	Lanigan.
St. Asacus,* promoted by St. Patrick 450.		
Domnald O'Dubhai, who was also B. of Clonmacnois	Died 1136,	or 1137
Flanachan O'Dubhai	1168	
Melisa O'Conactain	1174	
Florence Mac-Riagan O'Mulvaney, a Cistercian Monk,	1195	
Ardgall O'Connar	1214,	or 1215
The Sees of Rosconman, Ardcaur, and Drumelir, were annexed to Elphin before the English invasion.		

CLONFERT.		
Mœna†	571	
Fintan Corach, lived at the close of the sixth century.		
St. Senach Garbh, Ab.	620	621
St. Colman.		
Cumin, surnamed Foda	662	
Ruthmel, Prince and Bishop	825	
Cathald Mac-Cormac	861	862
Carmac Mac-Ældan	921	
Gilla Mac-Aibbin	1166	
Peter O'Moidar, a Cistercian Monk . . .	1171	
Mœlisa Mac-Award	1173	
Malcablan	1186	

* St. Asacus, or, as others call him, St. Asicus, was placed by St. Patrick at Elphin—some says as Bishop: it is, however, doubtful, whether he was one in the Saint's life time.—Lan. vol. 1, p. 341.

† According to some St. Brendan was the first Bishop of Clonfert: but it is more probable that he was not.—Lan. vol. 2, p. 30.

	Ware.	Lanigan.
Donald O'Find	Died 1195	-
Thomas*	1248	

KILMACDUACH.

St. Colman,† promoted about 630.

Indied	814
Ruquad O'Ruadan	1178

Odo (Hugh) was elected Bishop in 1227.

KILLALA.

St. Muredach,‡ consecrated by St. Patrick; promoted about 440.]

Killach, lived about 544.

Maelfegamain	1151
Imar O'Ruadan	1177
Donat O'Broda	1207

ACHONRY.

St. Nathy,‖ promoted about 530.

Melman O'Ruadan	1170
Gillananem O'Ruadan	1214

* The Annals of Inisfail make mention of Bishop O'Cormacain, who died at Clonfert in 1204: but they do not tell us the name of the See which he governed.

† St. Colman erected a Monastery in 520, where he afterwards became Bishop. He is also called M'Duach, or son of Duach. The year of his death is not recorded.—Lan. vol. 2, p. 343.

‡ St. Muredach flourished in the sixth century.—Lan. vol. 2, p. 183.

‖ It is doubtful whether St. Nathy ever became a Bishop.—L. vol. 2, p. 190.

PRINCIPAL SYNODS HELD IN IRELAND BEFORE THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

Extracted from Lanigan's History.

	A. D.
Synod of St. Patrick at Armagh.	
Synod of Bishops: of St. Patrick, Auxillus, and Isserninus, held at Armagh probably about	456
About the year 599, a Synod was convened in some part of Leinster, in which it was decreed, that the Archbishoprick of Leinster should be annexed to the See of Ferns.*	
Synod of Old Leighlin, convened to settle the Paschal controversy .	630
In 633, or 634, Colgan and O'Flaherty state, that another Synod on the same subject was held at Whitefield.	
Synod of Flan Febhla, Armagh, A. B. [Its decrees chiefly relate to a prohibition of some meats improper for food, and of such as contained blood.]†	695, or 696
Synod of Feadh Mac-Aengussa. [This Synod enacted regulations for the conduct of the Clergy and people.]	1111
This Synod is called by some the Synod of Usneach, (County West-	

* "The Life of St. Moedoc has: (cap. 28,) 'Deinde facta synodo magna in terra Lageniensium decrevit rex Brandubh, et tam laici quam clerici, ut archiepiscopatus omnium Lageniensium semper esset in sede et cathedra S. Moedoc. Et tunc S. Moedoc a multis Catholicis consecratus est archiepiscopus.' Usher observes, (p. 965,) that by this regulation the archiepiscopate was removed from Sletty. He adds that it was afterwards transferred to Kildare, where, he says, we find it in the time of Bishop Ferdomnach, who died in the year 1101. But that privilege, such as it was, appears to have been annexed to Kildare long before this time: for Cogitosus, who did not live later than the early part of the ninth century, in his prologue, calls the Bishop of Kildare an Archbishop. I have already remarked, that these so called Archbishops of those times in Ireland, excepting the Primate of Armagh, were not, strictly speaking, Metropolitans invested with such jurisdiction as the canon law has established. They enjoyed, by courtesy, a sort of honorary pre-eminence, which, as may be concluded from the title passing from one See to another, was, I dare say, often contested. It is true, that also in the African provinces the title of *Primate*, as the head Bishop of each was called, used to pass through various Sees; but there was a fixed rule as to this point, viz. that—with the exception of the Bishop or Primate of Carthage, to whom all the other Primates, Bishops, &c. were subject—those African Primates were always the oldest Bishops by consecration, of the respective provinces. Now in Ireland we cannot discover any such settled regulation; and I am inclined to think, that some of those provincial Archbishops owed their title and rank rather to the favour of princes, than to ecclesiastical constitutions."—*Lanigan, vol. 2, p. 340.*

† "Colgan (AA. SS. p. 382,) mentions the Canons of Adamnan as part of the

A. D.

meath ?) but Dr. Lanigan says, that he finds them distinguished as two distinct Synods; the Synod of Usnagh was, he says, held, for the purpose of dividing the parishes of Meath between the sees of Clonmacnois and Clonard.

Synod of Rath Breasail, under Gilla, B. of Lismore, Legate of Ireland about 1118

This Synod decreed, that (exclusive of Dublin) the dioceses of Ireland should be reduced to the number of 24: 12 of these were to be subject to Armagh, and 12 to Cashel.

Synod of Cashel, held by Domnald O'Conaing, A. B. and by the other Bishops of Munster who assisted at the consecration of the church, which had been built there by Cormac Mac-Carty . . . 1134

Synod of Tuam, under Muredach O'Dubthaich, A. B. [The chief object of this Synod was to procure the liberation of Roderic O'Connor, (son of Turlogh,) who was then held captive by Tiernan O'Rourke] 1142

Another Synod was held for the same purpose, by the Primate Gelasius, at Armagh, in 1144

Synod held by Gelasius, A. B. Armagh, and by Malachy, at Holmpatrick, in order to procure the Pallium for the Archbishops of Armagh and Cashel 1148

Several useful regulations were enacted in this Synod.

Synod of Kells, under Cardinal Paparo 1152

Synod of Mellifont. [This Synod was convoked for the purpose of consecrating the church of Mellifont]* 1157

Synod of Brigh Mac-Thaidhg (C. Meath,) held to promote ecclesiastical discipline. [In this Synod, Derry was raised to the rank of a regular episcopal See] 1158

Synod of Roscommon 1158

Synod of Clane, held by Gelasius of Armagh. [Several decrees relative

Acts of said Synod. They are eight in number, and may be seen in Martene' *Thesaur. Nov. Anecd.* (Tom. 4, col. 18.) They are of very trifling import except inasmuch as they show, that the practice of abstaining from blood according to the Apostolic precept, (Acts xv. 29,) continued to be observed in Ireland as late as the times of Adamnan. The second canon runs thus: Pecora de rupe cadentia, *si sanguis eorum effusus sit*, recipienda. Sin vero, sed fracta sunt ossa eorum, et *sanguis foras non fluxit*, refutanda sunt. Others of them contain rules with regard to using or not using the flesh of animals, that had eaten *morticinum*, i. e. the carrion of animals that died of themselves. In the eighth the owner of a horse or beast grazing in land annexed to a town, which may have wounded or hurt a person belonging to said town, is ordered to pay a fine to the injured person."—*Lanigan, vol.* 3, *p.* 139.

* On this occasion, Murtogh O'Loghlin, King of Ireland, gave, as an offering for his soul, to God and the Monks of Mellifont, 140 oxen, 60 ounces of gold, and a townland near Drogheda. O'Kerbail, Prince of Oriel, gave also 60 ounces of gold: and the Princess of Breffney, besides 60 ounces of gold, gave a golden chalice for the high altar, and vestments for the other nine altars.

A. D.

to church discipline and morals were passed in this Synod. It was also decreed, that no professor of theology should be admitted in any church in Ireland, unless he had studied at Armagh] . . 1162

Synod of Armagh. [This Synod decreed, that all the English, who were detained in servitude in Ireland, should be restored to liberty] 1170

Synod of Cashel, by order of Henry II., convened for the purpose of regulating some matters of ecclesiastical discipline . . 1172

Neither the Primate, nor any of his Suffragans, assisted at this Synod.

Provincial Synod of Tuam, under Cadla O'Dubhai, A. B. . . 1172

Three churches were consecrated by the Bishops who assembled on this occasion.

In 1175 there was a meeting of Bishops held at Waterford, in which the Bull of Adrian the Fourth to Henry the Second, and the confirmatory brief of Alexander the Third to the same Prince, were for the first time, publicly read in Ireland.

Synod of Dublin, under Vivian, Legate for Ireland, Scotland, &c. . 1177

In this Synod the Legate set forth Henry's right to the Sovereignty of Ireland, in virtue of the Pope's authority, and inculcated the necessity of obeying him, under pain of excommunication.

Provincial Synod of Dublin, under Cumin, A. B. . . . 1186

This Synod enacted various canons on discipline, on ecclesiastical ceremonies, &c. &c. These canons were confirmed by Pope Urban III.

Synod of Dublin, under Matthew O'Heney, A. B. of Cashel, and Legate. The Legate confirmed the donations made by Prince John to Cumin, A. B. Dublin, and the union of the See of Glendaloch to Dublin.

FINIS.









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